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THE NEW
# STATESMAN AND NATION
## The Week-end Review

**Vol. XII. No. 286 (New Series)** SATURDAY, AUGUST 15, 1936 [Registered at the G.P.O. as a newspaper] SIXPENCE

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THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION—The Week-end Review. *Incorporating The New Statesman, The Nation and Athenaeum, Week-end Review.*

THE now familiar technique of Fascist conquest is being vigorously applied to Spain. A dissident group—in this case army officers—is found in the victim country, a full war campaign is prepared and war is made without being declared. Meanwhile the democratic countries argue about legal rights, find excuses for aggression, watch over their own material interests and stand by while the conquest is carried out. If this process continues Spain will go the way of Manchuria and Abyssinia. The Spanish population will fight to the last man, but if Franco is armed from the Fascist Powers and they are left unaided, Fascism will slaughter its way to victory. Mussolini discusses non-intervention and makes reservations in order to keep the discussion going. Meanwhile he supplies the rebels with the munitions of war. The German threat to bombard Barcelona as a reply to the reported killing of four German subjects (who seem, according to reports, to have been helping the rebels) has been called off because both France and Great Britain would regard such action as tantamount to war upon Spain. The change in German tone in response to the French and British non-intervention appeal was, we understand, due to a British *démarche* in Berlin. But the fact that there is a point at which Great Britain would defend her interests in the Mediterranean does not affect the position of Spain. Sir Percival Phillips, the special correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph*, blandly reports on Thursday of this week that General Franco now has twenty Junker transport planes to use for transporting his black troops from Morocco, five German pursuit planes, "the original markings of which have been erased with black paint" and seven Italian Caproni planes of the type that sprayed mustard gas in Abyssinia. Fascist and Nazi airmen wearing civilian dress and carrying portable radio sets are instructing and helping the Spanish rebel airmen. To this the *New York Times*, in a smuggled message from Seville, reports the arrival there of a further nineteen German bombing planes manned by pilots of the regular army: these its correspondent personally saw. French witnesses report the arrival also of a score or so of German planes at General Mola's northern headquarters. Does there now remain a way of making the proposed treaty of non-intervention anything better than a cruel farce?

### The French and the British

Last week-end French Ministers addressed what were probably the greatest popular demonstrations ever seen on the Continent. They were scarcely reported in the British press, which found the Olympic Games more interesting. But those demonstrations in which more than a million persons took part in Paris alone have their significance. The constant cry from the crowd was "aeroplanes for the Spanish workers," and it is doubtful how long the French Government will be able to resist this demand to send supplies to Madrid when it is clear that Germany and Italy are, in fact, very actively intervening. At the moment two things prevent France from helping—the attitude of Great Britain which has returned a blank negative to private French inquiries about co-operation for anything but a one-sided neutrality, and the attitude of M. Daladier and some of his Radical Socialist followers who are anxious to risk no quarrel with the Fascist Powers. How long this situation can last we do not know; it is nearly ripe for explosion.

### The Civil War

The drama of the Spanish Civil War turns this week on General Franco's northward march. Very slowly, aided by his German and Italian 'planes, with Moors and the Foreign Legion as his vanguard, he is struggling through Merida towards Madrid. Badajos, on his left, held by the Republic, is the chief obstacle, and still the centre of fierce fighting. If it is captured, the rebels of North and South will be in touch, and have a continuous stretch of Western Spain along the Portuguese frontier. Elsewhere there is little change: the Catalans claim some successes against rebel Saragossa, whose fall would liberate forces adequate to oppose Franco: Madrid pushes General Mola a little farther through the passes, while the rebels press ominously against the Government's positions on the Biscayan coasts.

### Egypt an Ally

The Anglo-Egyptian negotiations are happily completed. Faced with an aggressive Roman Empire, British and Egyptians have composed their differences: the occupation is morally ended, and converted into a military alliance on the Iraq model; the condominium over the Sudan approaches reality; there is at last a prospect that the capitulations will be reformed out of existence by general consent, and Egypt should soon be admitted to the League. For this, thanks are due to Mr. Eden and Nahas Pasha, but chiefly to Mussolini.

### The Polish Enigma

The news that General Gamelin, the head of the French General Staff, will shortly pay an official visit to General Rydz-Smigly, Marshal Pilsudski's successor, may have some political importance. The last official French visit, that of the late M. Barthou, failed completely to restore the old cordiality. None the less the alliance survives, and if one is disposed to add "as a scrap of paper," here is a visit from the brain of one army to the head of the other. Will they discuss plans for common action? But it is hard to see how Poland, standing outside the Franco-Soviet Pact, can be counted an active partner of France in Eastern Europe. The relations, moreover, of Poland with Czechoslovakia, the other member of the Eastern Pact, are notoriously strained. The explanation lies in Nazi activity in Danzig. On the surface not even the destruction of the Danzig constitution has disturbed the harmony between Warsaw and Berlin, but General Gamelin's visit is almost certainly a reflection of an increasing fear of Germany's intentions. We may know more after this visit, but the key to the Polish enigma is doubtless that this country is balancing cautiously between the French and German camps, and trading skilfully on the rivalries and suspicions of both.

### Joachim von Ribbentrop

Herr von Ribbentrop has now been appointed German ambassador in this country after a protracted struggle with his rivals in Berlin. German politics are now almost wholly the politics of personal rivalry, and Herr von Ribbentrop is the head of several competing unofficial foreign offices. His personal friendship with the Führer—he is one of the very few men who can see Hitler at any time without appointment—has made his own office on the opposite side of the Wilhelmstrasse almost as important as the official Foreign Office. In procuring the London appointment Herr von Ribbentrop has defeated Herr Rosenberg (who has his own Foreign Political Office of the Party) and shows that his importance is greater than Herr Bohle's Nazi Party Foreign Department. His unofficial visits to this country have not been the fiascos that Herr Rosenberg's were. But his success has been social, rather than diplomatic. He was noticeably clumsy in his public handling of the Locarno discussions and failed in his efforts to get rid of Sir Eric Phipps from the British Embassy in Germany, and of the excellent foreign correspondent of the *Times* in Berlin. But he made a great hit with Lord Londonderry and other leaders of British society and he was in part responsible for the Anglo-German naval agreement of June, 1935. He has long been in Hitler's intimate counsels and it was he who engineered the famous meeting between Hitler and von Papen which immediately preceded Hitler's triumphant seizure of power. His object in this country will be the cultivation of friendship between the rulers of Germany and the upper classes in England. It is to be hoped that Ribbentrop's famous charm will not prove a parallel with the equally famous charm of another great Anglophile in this country, Prince Lichnowsky.

### The Barnsley Tragedy

On Friday of last week, fifty-seven miners lost their lives in a pit explosion at Barnsley. It is too early to say anything of the causes of this particular disaster. But this is the eleventh serious explosion since the war, a series of accidents in which more than seven hundred miners have been killed. Apart from these major disasters, the mines claim an annual toll of a thousand dead and 140,000 injured. Sympathy in the press and elsewhere is always forthcoming; in spite of the daily tale of road accidents, the public is still able to realise the peculiar tragedy of those who meet their death, not in the quest of adventure, but as the only alternative to death by starvation. Yet it may well be asked how much this public sympathy is worth so long as we are content to regard these disasters as Acts of God. Safety in mines is, unfortunately, in part at least a political issue. Collieries engaged in fierce competition with one another must perforce cut costs to the bone and the evidence in some cases suggests that this has led to an inadequate attention to safety precautions. Is there to-day a tendency to regard human life as less important because the supply of labour is so plentiful? Overtime in the mines was abolished partly because accidents tended to occur at the end of the shift, and it may be that in the frequent recurrence of pit disasters lies the miners' strongest argument for reduced hours. If private owners cannot afford to put into effect every possible means of saving the lives of their employees, that is only another reason for shifting the burden to the shoulders of the public.

### Servants of the Public

The public is now discovering that the railway companies use their control over travel agencies to aid them in their difficult struggle against the competition of the road and the air. The agencies on whom we all rely for full and impartial information are financially dependent on their right to issue railway tickets. Therefore the companies are in a position to insist that an agency that supplies railway tickets may not book seats on motor coaches or supply information or tickets for any airline other than Imperial Airways which is linked with the railway companies. The ban even extends to services with which neither Imperial Airways nor the railways are competing. It has been suggested that the reason for this surprising ban is that its far-sighted instigators fear that the profits made on such services may some day be used for the commercial development of aviation in this country. Questioned in the House of Commons Sir Philip Sassoon washed his hands of the whole business by saying that it was " a matter of contract or commercial agreement." But it is surely a matter of public concern. From the man in the street's point of view the most serious part of the business is that a travel agency can no longer be relied upon to give him the complete and disinterested information which he has the right to expect. It is certainly in the interests of the agencies and, in the long run we should think, of the railway companies, that this ban should be removed.

### The Un-Olympic Spirit

The most noticeable features of the Olympic Games so far have been the Nazi propaganda which has accompanied them, the successes of quite un-Aryan Negroes, Finns and Japanese athletes and the anger that has attended the boxing contests (which nearly led to the British and other boxing teams returning to England) and the scrap over the Peru-Austrian football match. Peru won by four goals to two, but the game was rough and spectators (exactly which spectators is obscure) invaded the field. The Committee demanded that the match should be replayed. The Peruvians refused and Austria was allowed a walk-over into the semi-final. Peru withdrew from the Games. In Lima large crowds demonstrated outside the Presidential Palace and the President announced from the balcony that he had received assurances from Argentina, Chile, Uruguay and Mexico that they associated themselves with his protest against the " crafty Berlin decision." The crowd stoned the German Legation. Dr. Goebbels has been set to the task of negotiating with the Peruvian Ambassador in Berlin, much as the now forgotten Mr. Thomas was rumoured to have intervened in the body-line bowling controversy between the M.C.C. and the Australian Board of Control. The incident, we presume, will quickly pass: the Atlantic Ocean and the Monroe Doctrine are sufficient guarantees of security.

*All MSS. and letters should be addressed to the Editor, at 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, London, W.C.1.*
*POSTAGE on this issue is : Inland, 1d.; Foreign, 1½d.; Canada, 1d.*

# DIVIDE AND CONQUER

Three years ago democracy went down before the Fascist onslaught in Germany without striking a blow. From that day to this, under leadership as fearless as it is unscrupulous, the Fascist offensive has continued. Nowhere save from the workers of Austria and Spain has it met with a resistance that even delayed its progress. The record of the democratic Powers has been one of incessant retreat, until the institution on which they relied for collective defence lies in ruins, and liberty, driven to bay along the Atlantic coasts, fights to retain even this last asylum. Everywhere the defenders of democracy have been taken in detail, and crushed one by one. Even to-day Great Britain and France waste precious weeks in talking non-intervention, while the Fascist Powers continue in fact to intervene. If nothing breaks this record of feebleness, if nowhere we make a common stand, history will repeat upon the tombstone of this generation the phrases of contemptuous pity that we ourselves have lavished on the German Socialists.

In retrospect this policy of drawing a ring round Spain which only the Fascist countries break through—if that should be the result—will rank in excess of caution with the record of the League Powers in the Abyssinian affair, but it may have incomparably graver consequences. In 1935, when the Duce defied the League, there was no common Fascist Front. To-day it manifestly exists. The agreement between Rome and Berlin over Austria was the prelude to the common action which now unites these Powers both in the wider Locarno conversations and in the Spanish crisis. Mussolini tested us and found us incapable of effective concerted action. Hitler repeated the experiment with a parade of steel helmets at Cologne. They are now united, prepared to march over us in step. Is the answer of the democratic Powers only to be the white flag of neutrality—the ensign that habit has consecrated on fields that range across two continents from Danzig to Manchuria?

The case to-day is graver for other reasons too. The Ethiopians are a backward people, to whom civilisation owed protection and sympathy rather than esteem. Spain has been and may be again a creative focus of our common glories. She thinks our thoughts and struggles to realise our ideals. Finally, she occupies in our western world a strategical position that will give to the Fascist allies, if they can win it, the control of the Mediterranean's gateway, and the ability to encircle France. Does anyone suppose that the realistic brains that direct Fascist policy are thinking only of prestige when they supply the Spanish reaction with money, munitions and bombing planes? They have their plan of campaign which covers not only the whole of Central and Eastern Europe but the Mediterranean shores as well. If once they can establish their system firmly in Spain, and penetrate and organise that country, the Roman Empire will have gained in military and economic power incomparably more than any African conquest could promise.

Why then does France, under a Socialist Premier, whose life has been devoted to the cause of international solidarity, propose neutrality? It is a novel policy that shatters the previously accepted law and usage of Europe. The Republican Administration, sprung from a recent election that gave it an immense majority, has the normal right of every lawful and recognised government to purchase arms and supplies abroad. Has it lost that right, has it ceased to be the constitutional sovereign power in Spain, because some of its generals have used foreign money to hire African troops to overthrow it? The Italians, on the other hand, by sending their own military planes under pilots from their regular army to aid these insurgents, have committed an offence against international law even grosser than that of Victorian England, when she allowed the Southern cruiser *Alabama* to go raiding from Birkenhead. The Southern States had an incomparably better claim to equal belligerent rights than these soldiers, who have no civilian political organisation behind them. If there were to-day as much respect for the law of nations as the nineteenth century possessed, Italy would have to pay, as England did, a heavy indemnity for this wrong. This policy, then, which treats as equals this government and these rebels, is at best a grave breach of civilised usage. Worse still, it has so far operated unequally. With rigid punctilio the democratic Powers have denied arms to Republican Spain, while the Fascist Powers have armed her enemies. As yet neither Italy, Germany nor Portugal has given any categorical promise to cease this support. They have assented " in principle," but that is all. The flat denials from Rome in face of the clear French evidence in the affair of the planes that crashed in Algeria warn us to put no trust in Fascist honour. Not even if a plain promise of neutrality in action as well as in principle should come at last from Berlin and Rome would it deserve belief.

It is common knowledge that the French Government fell back on this legally and morally indefensible policy of neutrality with reluctance. A government of spirit, standing in close fraternal relationship to the People's Front in Spain, would at least have begun by sending to President Azaña as many planes as the Duce sent to General Franco. Thereafter it might have bargained, for after such a demonstration, Rome might have felt at least a momentary respect for democracy. The explanation commonly given is that if the seconds had openly armed the duellists they would soon have been at war themselves. The French, therefore, chose the lesser evil; it seemed better that democracy should go under in Spain than that their country should be involved in war. This explanation, however, is incomplete. The French consulted Downing Street before they took their decision, and shrank from incurring any risk only after they had ascertained that if danger followed they must not reckon on British support. London, as so often in the long history of democratic retreats, held the key position and refused to use it for democracy or against Fascism. Mr. Baldwin's maxim that our frontier is on the Rhine is based solely on geographical and strategical considerations. It implies no sympathy or fellow-feeling with French humanity, French culture or French democracy. It is concerned only with the physical soil of the Channel coast: that must not fall under an alien military power. There is no thought in Downing Street of any Anglo-French solidarity for the defence of democracy and the institutions it demands.

This attitude even from the angle of Tory imperialism is as short-sighted as was the failure to stop the establishment of the Fascist Empire on the flanks of Egypt. We do not doubt that the Foreign Office realises the danger, and our information is that the change in Hitler's tone and his promise not to bombard Barcelona was due to a warning from the British Government. In other words, there is, after all, a point at which Great Britain will look after her imperial interests. But that, it seems, is as much as we can say. Class prejudice is the dominant factor. The " diplomatic correspondents " who interpret the Foreign Office mind to the public tell us that it fears a victory for Communism, and letters from distinguished persons in the *Times* have taken the same view. It is probable, should the Republic survive the civil war, that the workers' organisations, which have borne the brunt of its defence in this ruthless struggle, will have a decisive influence on its future development. But it happens that the Communists are the least numerous and the least influential of the several groups of Trade Unionists. The Socialists are very much stronger, but even more numerous and more typical of the Spanish movement are the Syndicalists. They inherit a long tradition of anarchist thinking that began with Godwin and Proudhon and ran on through Bakunin to Sorel. They are in sharp feud with all Marxists and especially with Moscow: they reject any centralised State and rely on local autonomous administrations based on guilds of productive workers. What form of new society will emerge by trial and compromise, if the Republic wins, it is too early to guess. The one solution that must be fatal to freedom and to European civilisation is a Fascism imposed by Moorish bayonets in the interest of the soldiery, the landlords and a Church that has fettered every motion of the Spanish mind.

But the habits of thought peculiar to Downing Street are not the decisive factors in this matter. If Downing Street decidedly and the French Government reluctantly chose neutrality, the final consideration that determined them was certainly the haunting fear of war. So it has been in all the phases of the struggle of Democracy and the League with Fascism. The German Social Democrats shrank from the horror of civil war which their opponents willingly risked. If the League was passive over Manchuria and ineffective over Abyssinia, again it was because many of those who were its sincere supporters shrank from any measure that involved this risk. And these are only the more salient phases of an incessant retreat. It is the groups in the community who are normally the wisest and the most humane for whom this scruple is an imperious instinct. On them the interested groups, moved by other motives, can always fall back. And so by our invariable retreats we make the danger that we dread. Fascism, now an international coalition, has grown by our hesitations incomparably more formidable than it was in its origins. Trading on our timidity and our disunion, it has evolved a swift and daring technique of action to which we oppose no common strategy of defence. Immune from effective resistance, it will at last provoke one of us, in sheer self-preservation, to a war that unity and courage might have prevented. The one expedient that may save us still is the formation of a firm defensive bond, an international People's Front, that must include our country with France and the Soviet Union. To talk of such a grouping while the present government sits in the seat of impotence would be mockery. The first step, if we would save anything of our menaced democratic civilisation, is to form in this country a People's Front.

# THE AMERICAN CAMPAIGN

**Governor Landon** having formally accepted the Republican nomination for the Presidency and made the customary "keynote" address in the presence of a huge and genuinely enthusiastic gathering, the Presidential campaign is now under way despite the fact that the President is still vacationing on the coast of Maine. Let it be said at once that, given the Republican viewpoint and ideals, the Governor's address was not an ineffective effort. His delivery was better than in his previous speeches, if the provincialism of his pronunciation was perhaps more marked. He spoke simply, straightforwardly, with considerable speed of delivery, made no attempt at oratory and was frequently interrupted by applause, genuine and spontaneous.

Although, as he explained, he was compelled to limit himself to only four topics, the Governor's speech did give a complete key to what his position is going to be. It delighted the conservatives and the Big Business men, for it proved him to be all that they asked. He is for the maintenance of high tariffs and is opposed to the reciprocal tariff agreements being negotiated by Secretary Hull, which Mr. Landon avers have "taken the American farmer out of foreign markets and put the foreign farmer into the American markets"—a contention which will not bear the most superficial analysis. His declaration about labour is skilfully but disingenuously phrased, since, while apparently entirely favourable to collective bargaining, it can and will be interpreted by the large employers to mean that he will uphold unions created and dominated by the companies. Similarly, his statement that the workmen may organise without "coercion or intimidation by the employer, or any fellow employee, or *any other person*" (italics mine) will be read by capitalists as a warning to all outside labour organisers that Landon, if elected, will definitely oppose any such activities.

As for relief, no sane and informed man believes that Mr. Landon is correct in asserting that, if chosen, he will obtain the necessary doles for the unemployed "out of the hides of the political exploiters" who have maladministered relief and used the dole-machinery for partisan purposes. But his criticism of the Roosevelt administration along these lines is eminently sound and just and richly deserved. It will hearten the millions yet unemployed who have been fearful that still less government aid would be vouchsafed them should the Republicans triumph. But their satisfaction will be as nothing compared with that of the great capitalists with Mr. Landon's belief that business "must be freed from incessant governmental intimidation and hostility"; "we must be freed from excessive expenditures and crippling taxation." Similarly his demand for national economy and for the ending "of an arbitrary and uncertain monetary policy" will be widely acclaimed. So far as his promise to protect business from any interference by Congress is concerned, Mr. Landon uses almost the same words as Mr. Hoover did in 1928.

These excerpts are surely sufficient to show how conservative Mr. Landon is and how clearly the issue is joined. True, he does not promise to balance the budget, nor does he specify how far he will go towards ending the present activities of the New Deal. But the fact is that the conservative Republican press is loud in its praises of the acceptance speech, of its frankness, straightforwardness and sincerity, that the congratulations of industrial magnates are pouring in upon the Governor from all directions. Critics who insist that there are no concrete suggestions and no constructive programme in the address are told to wait for the succeeding speeches, of which there are to be three before the end of August. The reactionaries are jubilant because they had feared that the Governor might turn out to be a Progressive Republican leaning to the school of Senators La Follette and Norris. While we still know so little of the Governor's real views, it is obvious that however much he may seek in future addresses to win liberal and progressive support, he is essentially a conservative who will cause no crowned head of industry to lose an hour's sleep.

Where then lies the hope of Republican victory which is unquestionably growing in Republican headquarters? In the first place, the approval of Wall Street ensures the raising of a huge campaign fund. Despite all their protests against the ever-rising taxes—perhaps because of them—the rich and privileged can be counted on to give freely and enthusiastically to defeat the President. Their venom is incredible; their hate of him beggars description; their vilification of the President and Mrs. Roosevelt knows no bounds. Of course they will open their purses—and Presidential elections have been bought before this. They will defend their contributions by asserting that they are merely fighting fire with fire, that the President is seeking to buy his re-election by the vast amounts spent for relief, the creation of hundreds and thousands of new offices and jobs, the doles to farmers, the endless sums spent upon public works—allegedly distributed for partisan purposes—so that multitudes are saying: "You cannot beat a President with five thousand millions to spend."

Next, the Republicans will drive at the Labour vote by fair means or foul. They realise that Roosevelt's great strength is with the masses, with the workers, and the farmers in many sections. Before this they have frightened labour into voting Republican, notably in 1888, 1896, and 1924. They have threatened the worker with the loss of the "full dinner pail" on more occasions than one. They have plastered the billboards, even in State elections, with signs declaring that the factories will close up permanently if the Democratic or Progressive candidates should win. This year they will leave no stone unturned to dragoon the labour vote. A friend, who is himself a manufacturer in a New England industrial city, told me the other day of three friends of his, also the heads of great establishments, who assured him that they would stop at nothing, above or below-board, to compel their men to support Landon. My friend, who voted for Roosevelt four years ago, said: "I am not sure that I shall not do the same myself." That the Roosevelt administration fears this danger more than any other I can vouch from personal knowledge. Last winter there was an effort to draft legislation against this terrorisation by employers; in my belief it is impossible to formulate any legislation to prevent it. One cannot muzzle employers who may sincerely believe that a continuance of certain policies will cripple or destroy their businesses.

Next, the Republicans are placing high hopes upon the new Union Party, headed by the radio priest, Father Coughlin, the Protestant clergyman, the Reverend Gerald Smith, who is the heir to the late Senator Huey Long's "Share-the-Wealth" organisation, and by Congressman Lemke, the Presidential candidate, who comes from North Dakota and represents a part of the Farmer-Labour movement in the North-West. Whether the Dr. Townsend old-age pension multitudes will finally line up with the Union Party is still not clear. It would surprise no one if it should later appear that Republican money was finding its way into the Coughlin treasury. But the damage that this new party may do to Mr. Roosevelt will be distinctly limited. The Republican leaders are well aware that the movement has started much too late to get on the ballot in various States, in many of which laws have been deliberately enacted to make the launching of a new party as difficult as possible. It is hardly likely that the Union Party will be on the ballot in any of the States in the deep South, for they were barred to the elder Senator La Follette in his phenomenal run on a third ticket in 1924.

Again, enormous sums will be needed to create an efficient machine where one is possible. If the usual difficulty of finding true and tried organisers may be overcome by the enthusiastic workers in the several cults, it is on the other hand not easy to drive three—or four—horses that have never before been harnessed together. Already Dr. Townsend has shown himself to be quite erratic and one of his sub-leaders is to be expelled for praising the President. Father Coughlin himself has gotten off with a most humiliating start. Having publicly called the President a liar, he has been compelled to make an abject apology in which he attributes this incredible slip to emotional excitement, which is hardly calculated to commend him to his followers as a wise and sober leader. The Reverend Gerald Smith is already being charged with seeking to supplant Dr. Townsend and take over the $200-a-month-pension-for-the-aged movement. Surely out of this extraordinary political agglomeration nothing permanent or constructive will arise. Yet there can be no doubt that in some States, notably Connecticut, many votes will be weaned away from the Democrats by Father Coughlin's "silver tongue." For many voters will have forgotten that eighteen months ago the priest was denouncing General Johnson for declaring that Coughlin would soon desert President Roosevelt whom the priest had then been praising to the skies.

Finally, the Republicans count upon the simple, unaffected bearing of Governor Landon to win the bourgeoisie to him. Already one hears pleased comment that the Governor is "just one of the home folks"; that he has no grandiose ideas, but is just a nice, simple, non-spectacular fellow. The voters like to cast their ballots for a man who is the prototype of many of their most successful neighbours. They may ask less what his programme is than whether under him things will not quieten down and return to the normal. A friend who has been spending some time in rural Illinois has come back profoundly impressed with the absence of any demand there for social change and economic reform. The desire is for the return of the prosperity of 1925–29 with all its dangers and evils. To the independent onlooker it would seem as if the best Republican strategy would be to concentrate the attack upon the President himself. Americans are in the habit of voting less *for* one man than *against* another. That was eminently true four years ago, and it is equally true to-day. Were Landon far less attractive and respected than he is, the people who hate Roosevelt would welcome him with open arms.

Moreover, the President is vulnerable at many points. There has been maladministration, uncertainty of aim, the absence of a well-defined economic programme, rank partisanship, dirty politics, waste and extravagance, the embarking on foolish and futile public works, such as the Florida Ship Canal, which no steamship company will use should it be completed, and the effort to create power by harnessing the tides of the Bay of Fundy. Were the Republicans themselves not so imperialistically inclined they could make a most effective attack upon the President for his rapid militarisation of the country, which is already costing more than two hundred million pounds a year. The President is also vulnerable because of the tremendous aggrandisement of the Presidential office which has gone on since his inauguration. The loudest and most spontaneous applause during Governor Landon's acceptance speech came with every reference to Presidential usurpation, the necessity of limiting the Presidential authority, and preserving the rights of the States from Federal encroachment. The defence of the Constitution remains extremely popular.

As for the President, he and he alone will win or lose the election. His marvellous radio voice and personal charm still have their effect, but in the long run it would seem as if he would have to tell the public in detail just where he is heading and what he seeks to accomplish in the economic field. If Governor Landon is well advised he will put to the President clear-cut and specific questions which cannot be ignored and do this in every speech that he makes. Already the President has had to announce that he will place every postmaster in the permanent civil service hereafter—something that he should have done four years ago, and not at the outset of a campaign for re-election *after* the opposing candidate had announced that, if chosen, he would do this very thing and more besides. Prophecy as to the outcome of the Presidential election is never more dangerous than at the end of a July preceding the vote because much can happen in the succeeding three months. Yet I think it safe to say that the President has the lead to-day despite the fact that recent polls—straw votes—show a swing towards the Republicans. OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD.

# A LONDON DIARY

THE *Times* should by now be willing frankly to correct its comically innocent remark that Fascism is not a creed for "exportation." The Spanish rebellion was a long-prepared plot, carefully organised with Fascist money and Fascist promises of support. The dispatch of Italian aeroplanes to help the rebels has been proved and there is now abundant evidence that Germany is playing the same game. I understand that before long we shall have from Spain full and indisputable proof that Nazi agents have long been active throughout the Peninsula. Proof will be welcome, because the best evidence, short of proof, will be immediately smothered in this country by Nazi propaganda. Actually it would be surprising if the Nazis had not been more active than the Bolsheviks in Spain. For the new Soviet "reformist" policy has involved a surprising reversal of the wheels: Moscow's dearest ambition is to avoid trouble and Communists everywhere have instructions to co-operate with other Parties and to call off tactics which alarm the bourgeoisie. Nazi-ism, on the other hand, is a young and violently subversive creed. Hitler himself said a few months ago (in a phrase which appeared in the early editions of some evening papers in this country and was then suppressed) that National Socialism was an "attainable goal" in every country. Its organisation is large and elaborate almost everywhere. Robert Dell's *Germany Unmasked* (a book that erred by being anti-German rather than anti-Nazi), contained the full text of the secret instructions to Nazi agents abroad. How energetically they have followed these instructions in this country the general public is unaware. Occasionally they overplay their hand and exhaust the patience even of the Home Office. The public heard of the Jacob case, because it involved actual kidnapping, but as a rule, when a Nazi agent is requested to leave this country, no one notices. Nazi activities in the United States have been far more fully exposed. I think we may soon have evidence that the most enthusiastic pro-Nazi will be unable to deny.

* * *

A few weeks ago the widow of an ex-soldier who committed suicide explained that her husband had been "depressed about his financial position." He had been employed as a vacuum-cleaner salesman, paid on commission. This is an extreme case. But anyone who watches the police court reports in the local press will be surprised at the large number of cases that arise in one way or another from the Hire Purchase system. Advertisements encourage the belief that these commission jobs mean a regular wage. At best the successful candidates find that the job entitles them to a small sum for expenses, fares and food; more often this "drawing account" means only a little commission in advance of prospective sales. More often still the salesman gets nothing at all except what he makes on commission. In a few cases the man may be given a week's "training"; that is, he will be taught selling patter which makes him think, as one such traveller remarked the other day, that he will be "able to sell mud—if it is only nicely wrapped up." Actually having nothing but the expectation of commission to live upon, many of these travellers tramp from door to door so hungry that their best hope is that a pitying housewife will give them an order so that they can get a meal. Frequently and naturally they turn to petty fraud. In a recent case that came up at the Sutton Police Court, two young men failed to get a single order in three weeks' canvassing. Not having a penny between them, they disposed of one of the machines they were supposed to be selling, for 15*s*., and eventually gave themselves up to the police. In this case the magistrates took a lenient view and even arranged to send one of the men back to his home town.

* * *

Take another case from Croydon County Court where a firm brought a batch of actions for payment on a patent household device which they said the defendants had ordered. One of the defendants explained that she was under the impression that she had only signed an acknowledgment that the canvasser had called, while another had signed a blank order which she understood was to be cancelled if her husband disapproved. Women seem often to sign contracts on condition that their husbands should know nothing about them—which makes pressure for a payment easier later on. The more one reads these cases the more sure one is that many of the orders are given simply out of sympathy with the canvassers. The same goods can be bought much cheaper at the shop only a few hundred yards away. But it is doubtful whether this good-nature really does the man a good turn. Most canvassers only keep the job for a few weeks; they get a few orders out of their friends and relatives and are then sacked. Larceny cases are frequent. Canvassers put customers' names on the forms, pocket the few shillings of commission and then sell or pawn the goods. A recent prosecution revealed nineteen such cases. Sending the men to prison does no good at all. When they come out they have nothing to live on but their wits. The law might insist on reasonable conditions of payment for canvassers.

* * *

Lord Hugh Cecil's appointment as Provost of Eton involves a by-election for one of the Oxford University seats. It is good news that Sir Arthur Salter is to stand as an independent candidate and that he is supported by an influential all-Party Committee. The Committee is being set up at the invitation of G. D. H. Cole, Professor Gilbert Murray and C. R. Crutwell who was official Conservative candidate at the last election. Unity could scarcely go further. Sir Arthur is, of course, one of those rare people whom thoughtful people of all Parties really respect. But he also has a definite and known point of view. His politics are those of the Next Five Years group.

* * *

Among the many remarkable Americans who have made a name as special correspondents, not one, I think, could, in sheer genius for reporting, hold a candle to Lincoln Steffens, who died this week at Carmel, California. He was born in San Francisco seventy years ago, went to the University of California and thereafter studied at several German universities. Good fortune made him a reporter, in 1892, on the New York *Evening Post*. He there learned the craft of worming secrets out of Wall Street financiers, police officers, Tammany politicians and gang leaders, and this training proved to be invaluable when a few years later *McClure's Magazine* gave him the place of chief muck-raker in its devastating crusade of exposure. He wrote the articles on "The Shame of the Cities," that terrifying chronicle of corruption in city and State government. Steffens always maintained that the bad men would give a journalist all the facts he wanted about the great game of graft, and he seemed to find also that the same bad men never minded how much of it was printed. Certainly Steffens had an extraordinary story of reminiscences. His autobiography is one of the most exciting books of the kind I've ever read. It is comparable with Nevinson's *Chances and Changes*, and I can't say more than that. From the rise of Theodore Roosevelt to the breakdown of Woodrow Wilson he knew almost every public figure in the United States. His conclusion after forty years of detective work and muck-raking was not only that the system is incurable but that decent men had better let the blackguards run it.

* * *

For centuries Christian blood was shed to keep the Moors out of Europe. To-day our pro-Fascist press is so desperately keen on working-up "a war for Christianity," that they are prepared to see the savage black troops of Morocco as the saviours of Christian civilisation in Europe. I take this superb bit of confused nonsense from last Sunday's *Observer*:

> As El Cid saved Spain from the Moors centuries ago, patriotic Spaniards of to-day want to save their country from the new barbaric wave which they feel is threatening Europe.

CRITIC

## THIS ENGLAND

**Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of the column goes this week to Mr. P. J. Langley.**

**All cuttings should be addressed to "This England," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1.**

Our Tangier Correspondent reports that Laraiche was shelled by a Government cruiser yesterday morning. No damage was done, but one woman was killed.—*Times*.

Since the publication of the last issue of the "Gazette," prices for all kinds of feather darts and flights have been increased by 50 per cent.—the outcome of the new Socialist regime in France.—*Conservative Clubs Gazette*.

A Scotch lady would like to take house in Margate, Ramsgate or Folkestone, if she could get two or three doctors to consult in her house. Anyone interested please write.—*Kent Messenger*.

For years past I have cried from the housetops that England was being governed by the Bolshevists.—Lady Houston in *Saturday Review*.

30,000 pigeons were released filling the air with the flutter of a million wings.—Commentary in a news film.

With its setting in the Highlands, this is a sweet story, full of humour and courage. The tall young Englishman finds his life intertwined with rowan berries.—Novel review.

*Verses written on any subject.* Just drop a line to the undersigned and tell him your requirements, or, if you care to make an appointment, *verses will be composed in your presence* on the theme desired. Friends tell me it is a gift. Test me.—Circular.

## STATELY HOMES AND THE STATE

THE two arts in which the English genius has most richly expressed itself are lyric poetry and country-house architecture. Every period of our history has left buildings conspicuous for their magnificence or distinguished by their refinement—the proud castles and modest manors of the Middle Ages; Elizabethan mansions, which reflect the energy—and sometimes the vulgarity—of the profiteers for whom they were built; the incomparable series of houses built in the last quarter of the seventeenth century and the first quarter of the eighteenth (the supreme period of English architecture); Georgian mansions pompous with colonnades and porticos, or soberly restrained, deriving all their dignity from the excellence of their proportions; and the final flowering under the Regency, when the whiteness of painted stucco and the curves of bow-windows gave to domestic architecture a consummate elegance.

The importance of these buildings has for two reasons been, at least until recently, inadequately recognised. The first reason is that public and official taste has been distorted by the narrow prejudices of the Ruskinian school. A Gothic pig-sty has been more admired than a Palladian mansion, and in consequence while any proposal to injure a medieval building, however undistinguished, rouses effective protest, only a few voices are raised to oppose the destruction of an eighteenth-century building, however magnificent. Yet, compared with that of France, the Gothic architecture of England, with a few exceptions, is clumsy and undistinguished. The great age of English building is from the Restoration to the Regency, and the supreme achievement of this age, apart from a few churches and colleges, is in the country houses, sometimes palatial, often modest, scattered in their hundreds all over the country.

To the public most of these are completely unknown; and that is the second reason why their virtues are not more widely recognised. The parish-church is open to sightseers, and schoolboys can be heard babbling of piscinas and squints, or distinguishing between Early English and Middle Decorated. But the houses, for the most part, remain invisible, carefully concealed in their undulating parks from our impertinent admiration. A Knole and a Chatsworth, indeed, are open to visitors, but Blenheim, and in fact most of the ducal houses, as well as hundreds of more modest masterpieces, rigidly exclude the profane public. Meanwhile too often these houses are being gradually stripped of their beauty. One owner dies, and the best pictures are sold to pay the death-duties. The next owner dies, and the furniture and carpets and silver go. A third owner dies, the house is closed, the roof falls into disrepair, and the park is sold to a speculative builder. In this way our finest material legacy from the past is being dissipated, to the benefit of nobody except American collectors. Is there no method of preserving these houses for the public benefit?

One answer is that the State or local authorities should take them over and turn them into museums or rest-houses. This is all very well, but at present there are no funds available for their upkeep, much less for their purchase. And the danger is that by the time that we have a Government prepared to take over these houses, they will no longer be worth taking over. Even if the fabric is intact, the contents will have vanished. And the furniture, pictures, panelling and carpets are as integral a part of a country house as the trees and lawns among which it is set. Whatever one's views about the ultimate destiny of these houses, we now need a policy which is immediately practicable.

Such a policy has been in fact developed by the National Trust. This body has already secured large tracts of unspoiled country in various districts for the public benefit—a duty, no doubt, which the State ought to perform, but we cannot afford to wait until it does so. It has also acquired by gift or purchase a certain number of houses. It is now inviting owners to bequeath houses to it, on the understanding that their heirs will continue to enjoy the tenancy. And Sir Charles Trevelyan has been the first to accept this invitation, leaving to the Trust his Northumberland home, with all the fascinating relics of the past which it contains. Under this scheme a house is preserved, and none of its beauties can be neglected or dispersed. And the public has access to it on certain days (at least thirty in the year). The advantage to the owner is less obvious, but real. There is no longer for his heirs the possibility of selling the property or any part of it. But neither is there any necessity to do so. There are no Death Duties to pay on the property, and the National Trust undertake all repairs required. The scheme is open to attack on both flanks. The Duke of Rutland, for instance, has announced that he would rather see his houses razed to the ground than in public hands. And there are equally silly individuals on the other side whose hatred of the landowner is stronger than their wish to preserve his possessions intact for that universal residuary legatee, the people of England. But the scheme is most sensible, and at least as an interim policy deserves Socialist support.

Whether it will receive a wide response from owners is, unfortunately, more doubtful. Too usually, even when they recognise and perform their duty to their tenants, they consider that they have no obligations to the general public. They talk of the sacredness of property, forgetting that their own rights are often based on legalised theft. Many of the great houses are on land taken from the Church at the Reformation, and most of their estates include common land enclosed most iniquitously during the eighteenth century. What the State gave, it can take away. These houses belong to England, and the public has a right to insist upon their preservation. Under the National Trust scheme the tenancy of a house cannot be legally assured to the present owner's family beyond the life of his son or daughter. Upon this heir's death, however quickly it followed that of the owner, the Trust would obtain absolute possession. It would, in fact, retain the next heir as tenant, but the obligation to do so would be honourable, not legal. Another difficulty is that many houses are entailed on unborn children, and some owners who see the advantage of the scheme can for this reason not enter it. Possibly the law in this respect can be modified. But the most serious obstacle to the success of the scheme is the passionate sense of property which for centuries our civilisation has encouraged. Whether a man comes into the scheme or not will depend on whether he would rather secure to his children the right to inhabit their ancestral home, or the right to sell it.

The success of the scheme would be a great public benefit. If it fails, we think that even a Conservative Government may find itself obliged to interfere with the "rights" of property. In Italy, for many years now, no important work of art has been allowed to leave the country without permission from the Government. And similarly permission should be necessary here for the sale not only of works of art to foreigners, but of land to builders. The Government at present has the power to spoil an estate by building a road through it, or by bomb-practice in its neighbourhood. Is the right to preserve an estate for the public benefit less desirable and less necessary?

RAYMOND MORTIMER

## DIFFERENCES

IT is the differences that make all the difference to the pleasures of travel. (And by travel I mean not trudging through a jungle and being deserted by one's native guides when in a state of high fever, but visiting well-known resorts in other countries than one's own by means of luxurious boats, luxurious trains, and luxurious motor-cars.) What a pleasure it was, when one first visited France, to be precipitated at once into a world using a different speech and different coinage, different clothes and different forms of architecture! There are well-meaning people who would like to see the whole world speaking the same language. For many of us, however, this would greatly diminish the amenities of travel. My chief objection to visiting Switzerland is that it is an English-speaking country. When I address a hotel-porter in pidgin French, I do not like to be replied to in perfect English. One of the great charms of Spain, when not in a state of revolution, is that even in the big cities you may be unable to make a hotel-porter or a shopkeeper understand you. I have seen four Londoners in a Madrid shop taking a quarter of an hour to convey to a chemist's assistant that one of them wanted a stick of shaving soap. In the end all four of them and the chemist's assistant were using sign-language like primitive men. That sort of thing makes one feel that one is really abroad.

Up to the present year, one of my many reasons for never having visited the United States or the British Dominions Beyond the Seas was that the inhabitants speak more or less the same language as myself. I should miss, on landing, I told myself, the rejuvenating music of strange and scarcely intelligible words—words that fall all the more sweetly on the ear because they are not mere customary speech but music. If I had remembered that Quebec, with its French-speaking inhabitants, is the eastern porch of Canada, I should have felt much less reluctant about crossing the Atlantic. But, having left school a long time ago, I did not know quite where Quebec was till I consulted a map on the eve of sailing. (Let no Canadian be offended by my ignorance. I have met people in many countries who did not know whether Belfast was in the north or the south of Ireland.) Quebec has, fortunately, enough elements of strangeness to give the visitor a sense of foreign travel. The direction-posts speak two languages. There is a street near the waterside that might have been borrowed from a René Clair film, with washing hung above the wooden balconies and swarms of lively children climbing into one's *calèche* and almost thrusting their tiny hands into one's pockets as they cry, "Pennies! Pennies!" in French voices. ("Penny" means "cent" here.) The very *calèche* in which one rides—high as a gig on its two wheels, with its glittering, white spokes and its orange-lined hood, is a pleasantly foreign-looking carriage. So is the four-wheeled buggy—both of them, no doubt, survivals preserved for the simple-minded traveller, and ill-adapted for toiling up streets as steep as the hill at Lyme Regis. The drivers, as they point out the sights—the wooden house where Montcalm lived, the Ladies' Protestant Home, etc.—speak the English of Frenchmen. If the French were not one of the most sensible peoples on earth, they would undoubtedly be running an irredentist movement for the recovery of Quebec.

Even apart from the French of Quebec, however, Canada is a sufficiently strange country to the visitor from England. Nowhere is it so like England as to make the visitor feel that he might as well have stayed at home. I have seen a quotation from an American who declared enthusiastically that the city of Victoria is "as British as Basingstoke." All I can say in regard to this is that I have yet to discover a hotel at Basingstoke where the visitor can see a ruby-throated humming-bird among the delphiniums in the garden. Nor does one constantly meet bearded Sikhs walking along the Basingstoke pavements. Nor is Basingstoke set among the waters of the Pacific in view of the mountains. The very Japanese who carries your luggage to the bedroom reminds you in Victoria that you are not in Basingstoke. It is often said that British Columbia is the most English of all the provinces of Canada, but you do not find shops called "meateterias" and "groceterias" in England. Nor is "starter" a common substitute in England for "hors-d'oeuvre." British Columbia, moreover, is a mountainous country almost to the water's edge with huge trees inhabited by birds that never sing in England.

For me it is the birds that chiefly differentiate Canada from England. One realises the difference as soon as one catches sight of one's first Canadian robin. I first saw this thrush-sized bird—black-headed and red-breasted—when driving up to the Heights of Abraham in Quebec. I asked the driver what it was. "We call it a googloo," he said. I cannot help wondering whether he understood my question, for I have met no one else who called the Canadian robin a googloo. The bird itself begins by being handsome, but, I confess, it ends by being irritating. How often have I crept up close to a bird on a bough, or excitedly watched a bird flying through a wood, hoping at last that I had discovered a grackle, a whiskey-jack, or a bobolink, and with what exasperating consistency the bird turned out to be a Canadian robin! There never was a bird I hated so. It is as if in England you were looking for crossbills and Dartford warblers and always finding sparrows. Canada is fortunately rich in sparrows—not only the common sparrow of Europe, but sparrows of a dozen kinds—the grasshopper sparrow, the white-throated sparrow, the chipping sparrow, the song-sparrow that sings like a canary, and others. There is scarcely a bird that one sees or hears, indeed, that does not remind one that one is in a new hemisphere. The blue bird, the warbling vireo, the myrtle warbler, the green-backed swallow, the loggerhead shrike, and the junco are all as un-English as "meateteria." I have not yet seen a cardinal or a scarlet tanager, but the knowledge that somewhere in Canada they are to be found lends the country something of the strangeness of an earthly paradise. Even the Red Indians at Calgary in their beaded and feathered finery of white, and the cowboys in their ten-gallon hats, gave less of an impression of strangeness than the unseen cardinal and scarlet tanager.

Equally strange, though less romantically so, is the "Gideons" Bible that one finds in every hotel bedroom. I suppose I had heard of the "Gideons" Bible before; but it came as a charming surprise to open the book and study the preliminary instructions to the reader:

1. If you are in trouble, read Psalm 34.
2. If trade is poor, read Psalm 37.
3. If very prosperous, read 1 Corinthians 10, verse 12.
4. If overcome with backsliding, read James 1, Hosea 14; 4-9.
5. If tired of sin, read Psalm 51; Luke 18; 9-14.

And so on. I looked up the psalm which one is advised to read when trade is poor, and discovered that it contains the consoling prophecy that "the meek shall inherit the earth." It might also, I imagine, suggest encouragingly to a man in financial difficulties that those who are more prosperous than himself are for the most part "evil-doers," who shall be cut off and perish and be as the fat of lambs: "they shall consume; into smoke shall they consume away." I am afraid that if I were down on my luck these pious reflections would afford me but cold comfort.

It is strange that, in spite of the multiplicity of "Gideons" Bibles, headlines in the press should announce that Canada is steadily deteriorating in morals. At least, a paragraph in one paper is headed:

SIN INCREASING, PRINCE EDWARD ISLANDERS HEAR.
INSTITUTE QUESTIONNAIRES FIND CANADA
BECOMING MORE WICKED.

This can hardly be true of the province of Alberta, which chose as its Prime Minister Mr. William Aberhart, who preaches the gospel of Social Credit from the pulpit of the Prophetic Bible—or Bible Prophecy—Church. Churches of all kinds seen to flourish in Alberta: they have not only the Anglican, Presbyterian and United Church of Canada, but the British-Israel World Federation, the Church of the Nazarene, the Rosicrucian Fellowship Centre, the Pentecostal Tabernacle, the Foursquare Gospel Church, the Christian Scientists, and the National Spiritualists. At the Calgary Stampede many of the refreshment-tents advertise the fact that they are run by such-and-such a church.

Apart from this, who could impute increasing sinfulness to a part of the world in which it is impossible to get a glass of beer on Sunday, even in the hotel at which one is staying?

That, I may say, is one of the differences between Canada and England that I do not altogether appreciate. Still, it is better than no difference at all. It makes one realise that one is in a foreign country, and that is the first pleasure of travel.

Y. Y.

## THE LAW AND NON-INTERVENTION

No country has yet recognised the Spanish rebels as belligerents. The legal implications of this are worth considering when examining the French "non-intervention" plan. For unless insurgents are recognised as belligerents their warlike activities outside the territory of the state of which they are nationals are piratical. It is the modern and more humane practice of most countries not to treat as pirates insurgent vessels which are operating in extra-territorial waters solely against the forces of their own State, but the slightest interference with the rights of other countries has hitherto been treated as amounting to piracy. Thus in 1902 the Germans took as a pirate an insurgent Cuban ship which had captured in transit a parcel of arms sold by a German firm to the Cuban Government. But though foreign governments may not be justified in interfering with the transport of troops on and over the extra-territorial waters of the Straits of Gibraltar, the ships and aeroplanes taking part are none the less pirates. The French Government's proposals amount therefore, to this, that in consideration for a promise from the Italian and German Governments not to equip further this pirate armada the democratic governments of Europe will refrain from aiding the legally established authorities in Spain. It may be good diplomacy but in law it is a curious proposition.

It might be supposed that Italy and Germany would legalise their position to some extent by recognising the rebels as belligerents. But if a state of war was admitted to exist, the Spanish Government could maintain against neutrals a blockade of the rebel ports, and Germany would no longer be able to complain that a German merchantman was shelled entering Ceuta. Further, "angary," i.e., the right of a Government at war to seize neutral property needed for the immediate prosecution of hostilities would apply, and the Spanish Government could answer the German protest against the taking of Lufthansa airliners with the same legal arguments with which Germany successfully established her right in the Franco-Prussian war to take English barges in the Seine and sink them to make a blockade.

At present it appears that the Spanish Government is treated as a belligerent only when it is to its disadvantage. Thus the British authorities have interned a Government seaplane which could not leave Gibraltar within twenty-four hours, while the French put pressure on Spain to return a French aeroplane properly commandeered under the rules of war.

Even more difficult to appreciate is the interpretation placed on " non-intervention " by the British Air Ministry which told a London newspaper that it had no legal power to prevent the export of " civil aircraft." If this in fact were so, English pledges of " non-intervention " would be valueless, for in English and in International Law there is no distinction drawn between civil and military aircraft. An aeroplane which does not belong to the State and is piloted by a civilian is a civil plane whatever its type. Actually, however, the Government have full powers. The Customs and Inland Revenue Act of 1879 provides that the export of " arms, ammunition, gunpowder, military and naval stores . . . " may be prohibited by Proclamation or by Order in Council. In 1918 by an Order made under Parliamentary authority all aircraft were deemed to be included in the term " military and naval stores," and the last Order in Council issued under the Act in 1931 expressly provides that " aircraft, assembled or dismantled, and aircraft engines " shall not be exported without a licence from the Board of Trade (acting for the Air Ministry and the Foreign Office).

It will be noticed that there is no suggestion of distinguishing between military and civil planes.

However, in order to encourage the sale abroad of British fighting planes it was arranged by Sir Samuel Hoare when Air Minister that the Board of Trade should give an open general licence for the export, everywhere, except Abyssinia, of every description of aircraft.

Thus though all aircraft are technically war material they can actually be exported without any restriction, though the Air Ministry boasted before the Arms Commission that they do, in fact, control the foreign sales of British firms.

If the British Government wishes seriously to implement the French plan there are no legal difficulties. The Board of Trade can revoke to-morrow their open general licence and so control the export of all planes, civil and military. If, in fact, it is not intended to revoke the open general licence, then British participation in " non-intervention " will not be taken seriously.

BARRISTER

# Correspondence

## THE SPANISH CONSPIRACY

SIR,—I have received from an English friend who has lived many years in Spain, who is now living near Malaga, and who is well qualified to form a judicial estimate of the present situation, a letter which I think likely to be of interest to your readers. He says:

> This is not a struggle between Fascism and Communism, but a struggle for liberty against tyranny. The Fascist generals are of the true brand: I hear them talking on the wireless from Seville and Africa: patriotism, death for Mother Spain, resistance to the " international Jewish bankers of Amsterdam." That gives their quality; then threats of summary execution to loyal soldiers caught by them, workers who remain on strike, etc. Without any necessity they have brought on the most terrible civil war known in Europe since the religious wars in Germany. They proposed to win it by bringing over from Africa the Terejos or Foreign Legion, a collection of 15,000 ruffians of every nation mixed with Moorish tribesmen, who loot and rape and murder whenever they can. They did so in the November, 1934, rebellion of the miners at Oviedo. The few hundreds they have been able to get across have taken Carmona (a town near Seville) by storm and " exacted reprisals, which were necessary but most regrettable."
>
> They brought on these calamities without any reason, for as you know from my letters the danger of Communism had disappeared and moderate opinions were winning everywhere; a government such as there is now in France was to be expected in October.
>
> And now? I do not even now think that Communism will follow on a victory of the Government. It is the police and the soldiers who are fighting these battles, not the armed workmen who are mostly useless. Azaña is as much opposed to Communism as you are, and he is organising the defence and he will hold the laurels if the people win.
>
> I beg you to point out the extraordinary wickedness of this thing that the Fascists have done. In every town, in every village almost in Spain troops or police or plain clothes Fascists rose and began killing their fellow citizens. Without warning, at a moment's notice. In Malaga, for instance, the soldiers began to fire on the *guardias de asalto* and Fascists sniped from roofs. All that the English here notice is that next morning workers with red handkerchiefs burned those houses from which they had sniped and others belonging to the instigators of this outrageous assault. Even Hitler refused to bring civil war upon his country. A coup in some garrison town, a *putsch* in Madrid could have been forgiven to a losing party perhaps —but this——

BERTRAND RUSSELL

## ATROCITIES IN SPAIN

SIR,—I heard four nights ago on the wireless that English refugees reported having seen many atrocities at Malaga. That report is, alas, true—though as they had already embarked on a British warship they could not themselves have seen them. Five or six men were actually taken out of their houses and shot by workmen on Tuesday and Wednesday, and as these men were most of them rich, the crime was naturally enormous. Further, about a dozen fugitives were shot in the hills around Malaga, and as two of them were disguised priests—well, I cannot contain my horror.

What a pity then that those nice generals and Fascists should spoil their case by a few imprudences! I have just received an account by an eye-witness of their executions at La Linea. These chivalrous Spanish gentlemen are not only shooting down their prisoners in groups, but they have shot the ex-Governor of Huelva, a well-known politician of a mildly liberal kind, and a number of other moderate people belonging to Union Republicana and Izquierda Republicana. An officer with a gold plate in his mouth and a protuberant stomach (name unknown) took a photograph of them just before they fell.

I fear that in view of foreign opinion that was a bad thing to do.

And there is General Queipo de Llano. We all know him, with his drunkard's jokes and insults and menaces, for he gives a long radio talk every night from Seville. No. Decent Conservatives must stop there. There are certain people so nasty and so infamous that one would not like even with a stick to touch them.

GEORGE BEATON

Malaga.

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SIR,—I have just returned from Spain, where I was in an unusually good position to observe the condition of the Catalonian countryside, and I wish to rectify some of the false impressions which unscrupulous newspapers here have found it convenient to circulate.

On Sunday, July 19th, when the military and Fascist rebellion was still ablaze in Barcelona, I walked with Mr. Franklyn, United States Consul General, through the streets of the town to his Consulate, in the heart of the town. We were, I believe, the only two neutral persons to be at the scene of the actual fighting. Nobody molested us in the slightest degree.

Churches were alight in all parts of the town, but many had been used as barracks by the rebels. Perhaps their last stronghold to be subdued was the Church of the Carmelitas. The churches at Plaza Bonanova, Plaza de San Pedro, Dominicans of Horta among others were taken only after a battle. That a hot-blooded people should react violently against institutions which clearly had shown Fascist sympathies was not surprising.

I was called in to assist the British Consul to evacuate British subjects and was able to obtain a very accurate idea of how foreigners were treated by the " bloodthirsty reds." One British subject was isolated some hundred-odd miles from Barcelona. When this was explained to the local " committee " they immediately placed a car at my disposal with a driver and an armed escort. At each village I was passed on to the next committee which treated me generously, until I arrived at Palamos, the end of my journey. Returning through the inland country I covered a large part of Catalonia and rubbed shoulders intimately with governing bodies in the villages.

It was interesting to notice that although the pictures, prayer books and benches had been burnt, nearly all the churches remained intact, except those from which sniping took place.

Stories told by refugees of nuns' heads being carried on motor-car bonnets may be put down to either hearsay or malicious sensationalism.

The streets of Barcelona were patrolled by the armed working men who, from time to time and acting under their leaders' instructions, searched the houses of those known to have Fascist tendencies. Where arms were found the tenants were arrested; otherwise not a thing was touched. This fact astounded many of my Right Wing friends. There were, of course, several opportunists who made hay while the sun shone, but they were exceptions.

Foreign property has been respected. The buildings of the Barcelona Traction, Royal Bank of Canada, Anglo South American Bank, etc., stand untouched. An Italian shipping office in the Ramblas was burnt to the ground after the machine-gun fire from its interior had been silenced, a number of innocent passers-by having lost their lives.

In summing up, I may say that those who did not interfere were not interfered with. HENRY M. HARSKIN

Villa Isabel, Bonanova, Barcelona.

## BRITISH FOREIGN POLICY

SIR,—I readily endeavour to answer "Socialist's" questions.

(1) I do not know in what context or with what qualification Sir Thomas Inskip declared that "defence has nothing to do with foreign policy." But, as it stands, I disagree with it. Indeed it is absurd. The Opposition are fully entitled to vote against the Army Estimates if, in their opinion, the effect of increased armaments will be to make our foreign policy more objectionable and injurious to good causes than it will be otherwise The questions are whether such an opinion would be well-founded, and in what circumstances the Opposition is entitled to threaten "a nation-wide refusal to fight, or to work, or to pay taxes in case of war, unless and until the Government give adequate guarantees"—to quote the conclusion of "Socialist's" letter. For I would point out to "Socialist" that there is a distinction in a constitutional country between voting against the Army Estimates and incitements to sedition.

(2) I agree that the Government's apparently sincere support of the Covenant gained them votes at the General Election. I agree that the League has, collectively, failed in its object and that this country bears a heavy, though not the sole, responsibility for this failure. But, since we have committed no act of aggression and have accepted all the decisions of the League, I doubt if it would be true to say that we have "defaulted on our treaty obligations." "Socialist" almost writes as if he saw little distinction between our behaviour towards the League and Mussolini's.

The discreditable failure of our foreign policy during the Abyssinian War and on many other occasions justifies the Opposition in attacking it. It justifies them, moreover, in re-considering their attitude towards armaments. But the result of such re-consideration is not, in my opinion—far from it—that Great Britain is so actively engaged, or so likely to be in future, in supporting the forces of evil, that all possible steps should be taken to weaken it.

(3) The League has failed to uphold the collective system, and no one now puts much trust in it. But I do not agree that the British Government has abandoned the collective system in favour of something else in such a manner, so far as this country is concerned, as "automatically to wipe out any distinction between self-defence and the use of war as an instrument of national policy." The failure of the League, for which we must bear our responsibility, makes war more likely. I do not agree that it makes *inevitable* a great war in which we shall be engaged.

(4) I do not believe "that it is everyone's duty to fight in any war in which the British Government alleges self-defence." But three points arise. Firstly, I make a distinction between conscientious objection as an individual act and incitement to a collective refusal to obey the law. Secondly, to justify incitement to a collective disobedience of the law, or to sedition, or to rebellion (to take three degrees of action), requires a much graver cause than the grounds which justify parliamentary and constitutional opposition. Thirdly, these acts also require for their justification a reasonable probability of success. Futile behaviour which plays into the hands of the Fascist forces is criminal. In present circumstances it would be crazy and disastrous for the Left to contemplate the use of unconstitutional and illegal weapons of opposition. I should not wish to occupy your space by these obvious and familiar explanations. But "Socialist's" letter indicates throughout an atrophy of the power to distinguish one thing from another.

Let me return to the real issues. It is impracticable, and indeed unreasonable, to "demand" a cut-and-dried foreign policy designed to meet future contingencies arising in unforseeable circumstances as a condition of this country's having a Navy; though of course this does not mean that we should not attack a foreign policy we dislike and use all our advocacy to secure specific changes in it. Is it "Socialist's" idea that the Navy should be alternately scrapped and rebuilt every time that a General Election leads to a change of government, the scrapping to take place at the behest of the party which has just lost the election? This is a Bedlamite thought. The only practicable course is to form a judgment of probability based on our view of the temper of the country, its motives and ideals, its public opinion in the broadest sense, and the sort of people likely to be in power from time to time in the near future. It is on such a judgment, and on such a judgment alone, that we can arrive at a reasonable conclusion whether we wish this country to be strong or to be weak. Of course, I agree with you that it would be dangerous to put arms at the disposal of Lord Rothermere. But why do you suppose that this is a likely thing to happen? And if it were, what good would it do to exact pledges from Mr. Baldwin?

This leads me to the alternative foreign policy which "Socialist" puts forward. I make no complaint of his advocating it; I am not yet convinced by it, but I am ready to consider it or some variant of it; I complain only against the extreme conclusions to which he flies in the event of this particular policy being rejected. But let us see what it is. He wishes us to go far beyond the existing Covenant and to demand a new League, the members of which would be definitely committed to give armed assistance to one another in case of aggression. Hitherto an overwhelming majority of the electors of this country have been strongly opposed to our entering into such commitments, and those of us with pacifist leanings, including the NEW STATESMAN AND NATION, have led this opposition. I admit that, in view of the failure of the League as it is at present, we have to reconsider the problem. If we commit ourselves to fight in all wars, will this have the effect of preventing any war? Perhaps. It is arguable. But it would be a terrible decision to take. Do you suppose that those who voted in the Peace Ballot would support it? I believe myself that the average man would passionately oppose it. He wants peace, and he cares about nothing else. But to obtain peace by undertaking to join in every war is a calculation which, even if it be correct, his mind boggles at. On the other hand, the argument that it is dangerous to-day that only the brigand powers should possess armaments carries conviction. And, surely, it should to those who are still capable of distinguishing one thing from another. At any rate, you must make some small progress in converting public opinion before you threaten the Government with unlawful opposition, unless it adopts a policy to which at present the country is likely to be deeply opposed.

Those to-day who cannot endure uncertainty alternate between joining Dick Sheppard's faith of non-resistance and asking us to take up arms of violence on all occasions to defend the world against Fascism. There is something to be said for both. Nevertheless, these are refuges, escapes from the torment of thinking. What relief, what emotional comfort to get amongst like-minded friends with no obligation to talk realities! But this is the cloister, not the world. And in the unresolved perplexities of the world it is the more courageous, and the more useful, course to remain.

Tilton, Firle, Sussex. J. M. KEYNES

## CONSTRUCTIVE PACIFISM

SIR,—May I offer a word of comment on Mr. Joad's admirable article on this subject in regard to the functions of the policeman and the soldier, having in my time done considerable service as both in many parts of the world? Says Mr. Joad: "I recently asked a signer of the Dick Sheppard pledge . . . since he disavowed the use of force by the League, with what logic he supports the police in his own country." The reply was that "the policeman does not take life" . . . "the analogy was unjust," and so on.

Mr. Joad did not agree with this explanation.

Having signed the pledge myself, I feel that both Mr. Joad and his friend have missed the point, because the friend, having signed the pledge and being driven somewhat into a corner of his own making "had the hardihood to be logical" . . . and said he would "abolish the police force and see what happened."

I think there is not much doubt as to what would happen! But this pledged member of Canon Dick Sheppard's movement is stating his own personal view, which I am quite certain, from my knowledge of the contents of many letters, is not the view of the majority.

The misunderstanding may arise from the confusion in the mind of the functions of the policeman and the soldier, which are totally different and *never* can be the same, not even in the Saar. The policeman is of the law; the soldier, in action, is a law unto himself. It is a question of not confusing "war" with "legal force" (that is to say the minimum force requisite to meet the need). There is no such thing as a "minimum of force" in "war," and as for the "killing," that does not arise in the same way as it does when a policeman "kills"; then there is an inquest before which the policeman has to justify his action in the same way as has a civilian "killing" in self-defence or under justifiable circumstances.

If the policeman has to arrest A he never can be justified in departing to the house of A's sister, setting fire to it, murdering her and her children and then perhaps expecting a D.S.O. for having done so! But that is what happens in "war."

An international police force will not work for a similar reason. An I.P.F. could only be a camouflaged "war" machine made up of soldiers.

I am writing for myself, but I am a sponsor of the P.P.U., and I feel that a "warless" world run on police lines is what most of us are working for.

Surely, sir, the Black and Tan era in Ireland failed with ignominy and disgrace because the Government (unable to rely on the Army to do a dirty job) tried to make ex-soldiers dressed up as policemen do a job too dirty for soldiers to perform and too tough for the regular police code to cater for. The Black and Tans were British Fascists in Government uniform, construed in terms of 1920-21. It took me seven months to rumble to the ramp.

So I think Mr. Joad and his friend would be well advised to differentiate between "war" and "legal force" as we know it in our country.

F. P. CROZIER
Brig.-General

East Lodge,
Walton-on-Thames.

[We have been obliged to hold over many letters on this subject.—ED. *N.S. & N.*]

## THE *TIMES* AND PUBLIC OPINION

SIR,—Why does the attitude of the *Times* on the Spanish rising surprise you? It is perfectly consistent. What else did you expect from a newspaper which for twenty years has applied its own policy of (journalistic) non-recognition to Soviet Russia? And which only the other day achieved the feat, editorially, of discovering in Mr. Noel-Baker's victory at Derby merely fresh proof that what the country wanted was a quick bargain with Hitler?

What *is* surprising is how the *Times* has ever come to be looked upon as a leading exponent of English public opinion, when in fact it seems constantly to have misrepresented it. In all the great issues of foreign politics the *Times* has stood for policies which in the end the country has repudiated. While English opinion showed growing sympathy for a solution of the Eastern Question—to take a few examples from the last generation or two—on the basis of the democratic emancipation of the Balkan peoples, the *Times* wanted to preserve the integrity of the Sultan's Empire. In the South African conflict, the sentiments which ultimately inspired British policy were not those propagated by the *Times*. That was true also in the Irish issue, if I may bring that in. At the end of the war the *Times* was sure that the country wanted no mercy shown to Germany and was in full sympathy with M. Poincaré's temper. Now the *Times* has swung as categorically to the other side; is there any reason to believe that its present advocacy is any less unrepresentative than it has been in the past?

You, Sir, and others, will be better able to explain what has made the *Times*, with such perverse consistency, so false a guide to English public opinion. I merely note, as a possibly revealing contrast, that in all the issues which I have mentioned the policy which this country ultimately upheld was that urged by another journal—the *Manchester Guardian*. Perhaps to their two differing attitudes applies the *mot* of the late Emile Faguet—and if that should be so it would imply also a tribute to the sound heart and solid sense of the mass of English opinion—that, in politics, if you stick to your party you may often have to change your principles, while if you stick to your principles you may as often have to change your party.

D. MITRANY

Kingston Blount, Oxford.

## BOMBS AND BUCKETS

SIR,—As a conscientious student of the Government's instructions on how to remain alive in the next war I confess to being baffled by the difficulties of co-ordinating all the advice I receive.

First, you remember, we were told that gas need not worry us. All we had to do was to retire to the cellar, stop up every crack through which gas might seep, abstain from talking to economise oxygen, and leave the rest to our resourceful Government.

Then came resourceful Col. W. Garforth, of the Air Raids Precaution Department, with a different set of instructions. His interest is incendiary bombs. The method of coping with these is simplicity itself. "The best way to deal with them" (I quote a newspaper report of one of Col. Garforth's speeches) "is to have a quantity of earth or sand sprinkled on the roof, and a shovel kept ready so that the bomb can be picked up and dropped into water to fizzle out, and the earth and sand used to put out the surrounding fire."

In another report the advice was slightly different. "Close by should be kept a bucket half full of sand into which a burning bomb can be put with a long-handled shovel. The bucket can then be carried out of the house. Dark glasses should be worn for this operation."

The slight discrepancies in the instructions regarding the contents of the bucket can easily be dealt with by every resourceful citizen by keeping several buckets of both sand and water and mixtures of both available, with an assortment of shovels of various lengths of handle. But what worries me is to know how I may obey two sets of instructions at the same time, and how I can remain speechless in my airtight cellar the while I scramble about the roof with buckets and shovels, exchanging my gas mask for dark glasses.

And I still await instructions for dealing with high-explosive bombs.

And, though no doubt the Government has complete information on the point, is it possible that the enemy will be unsporting enough simultaneously to mix up incendiary, gas and high-explosive projectiles for our better bewilderment?

A. E. BLAKE

Galleons, Homestead Road,
Chelsfield, Farnborough, Kent.

## ENGLISH HOTELS

SIR,—Mr. Mortimer's strictures upon English hotels, his unfavourable comparison of them with the French, are at least twenty years out of date. "How far have English hotel bedrooms improved within living memory?" he asks. It depends, of course, upon the length of the memory and the width of the experience, but, to judge from my own, I should answer: "immeasurably."

During the last three years I have stayed in a considerable number of hotels in France, Italy, Austria, Germany, Holland, Ireland and England. If you take the guide book three star hotel, the standard of cooking in the English is equal to that of the Dutch and French on the average, superior to that of the German and Austrian, vastly superior to that of the Italian and Irish. In comfort and cleanliness, the English beats all the others, though it is true that there are more hotels in France where you can get a private bathroom. The English two star hotel takes the same place. The English one star hotel is on the average definitely inferior to the French in cooking, but about equal to it in comfort and plumbing.

As regards cooking in English hotels, there is this to be said. If you don't like English food and do like French food (or what too often passes for French food, the super-expensive, luxury food which is drearily the same in every large hotel in every large city from Manchester to Marseilles and from Warsaw to Lisbon), you will not, of course, like good English food. If you don't like the perfectly cooked steak-and-kidney pudding which I ate in Lyme Regis, or the divine cold veal-and-ham pie which I ate in Gloucester, or the perfect eggs and bacon in Falmouth, or the roast beef and Yorkshire pudding of Shrewsbury, or the splits and cream of Penzance, or the immaculate porridge, broth and scones of Coldstream, or the cream and blackberry tart of Lindfield, or the cold ham of Holford, the fault is not in English cooking, but in the narrow intolerance of your own palate. But it is as unreasonable to ask for good French coffee or a good French omelette in Gloucester as it would be to complain that at Macon, where I ate the best dinner, or at the Hague, where I ate the most delicious lunch of my life, you cannot get eggs and bacon or steak-and-kidney pudding which are eatable or even tea which is drinkable. Leonard Woolf

Rodmell, Lewes.

[Mr. Mortimer writes: "I wish Mr. Woolf would tell me of any hotels in any English cathedral cities where I can get food as good as I have eaten in hotels in such French cathedral cities as Rouen, Dijon, Bourges, Aix-en-Provence and Toulouse. I do not "ask for good French coffee in Gloucester": I ask merely for good coffee. And my complaint about food in hotels here is not that it is English, but that it is bad. The materials in this country are excellent, and you can get first-rate English cooking in some London clubs. There are also, I agree, country inns with admirable and unpretentious food. But commonly in our hotels the soup is just gravy, the fish smothered in a would-be French sauce, the joint overcooked, the vegetables tasteless, and the fruit inedible. How often in an English hotel has Mr. Woolf been able even to obtain a Cox's Orange Pippin? As for plumbing, running water in the bedrooms is usual in France, and far less usual in England. Again, when I go to Paris, I get a most comfortable bedroom with private bathroom in the middle of the town for 10*s.* 6*d.* My French friends often ask me for a similar hotel in London. May I enlist Mr. Woolf's help in finding one?"—Ed. *N.S. & N.*]

## THE POPULAR FRONT

Sir,—It is high time that the advocates of a Popular Front made it quite clear where they stand on the issues of the Colonies and India. The colonial peoples and Indians are at present firmly convinced that even if a Popular Front came into power at the next general election (assuming there is a general election, which is very unlikely), the traditional policy of Parliament towards the Colonies will continue unchanged. In the light of the policy pursued by the last Labour Government and also from what one knows of the attitude of some of the leaders of the Labour Party, there is every justification for this view. But the question which I should like to put before all advocates of the Popular Front is this, "Is it possible to restore democracy at home while maintaining a system of ruthless oppression distinguishable only in name from Fascism in the Colonies and in India?" It seems to me that before attempting to answer the question we might profitably speculate on the situation in Spain as it exists to-day. Had the Spanish Government liberalised its colonial policy to the same extent as its domestic policy, Senor Franco would not be transporting Moorish troops as he is doing in thousands to-day. He would have to win his spurs in Morocco first before he could embark for Spain.

British capitalism wields far more power and has far greater resources in its Colonies than its Spanish counterpart. What guarantee is there that in the event of a conflict between Democracy and Fascism in Great Britain the latter will not be able to draw upon its huge resources in its far-flung empire? What guarantee is there that Indian and African troops will show any greater affection for a British Popular Front than the Moors are showing for the Spanish one to-day? The conclusion is that if you really want to restore Democracy at home you cannot safely allow the present system of tyranny to continue in the Colonies and in India. The Popular Front programme must have something definite and encouraging to say on this question not as an act of grace but from a clear recognition of the fact that Democracy in England is inseparably linked up with Democracy in the Colonies and in India. A. K. Mukherji

## PRIMITIVES

Sir,—While one hesitates to question the opinions of anyone with the standing of Mr. Paul Robeson, surely his article in your current issue does some disservice to the cause he has at heart? In accepting the premise that the Negro thinks in concrete symbols and the Western in abstract concepts and attempting to prove that the symbolic or "picture" thinker is, if not superior, at least the equal of the abstract thinker, he is, I submit, attempting to defend an untenable position.

It may be true that 99 per cent. of the Negro race think pictorially—I have no personal knowledge on this point; as a salesman I am perfectly certain that the proportion is quite as high among Western races. How much tooth paste would be sold by the most logical exposition of its virtues if accompanied by a picture of a dyspeptic gentleman with gapped teeth? Yet a picture of a handsome woman with thirty-two perfectly sound teeth and the words "Happy teeth with Blank's Dentifrice" will probably do the trick every time.

The fact is that there is no such thing as an abstract thinker or a pictorial thinker, but only a combination of the two. The abstract thinker is developed by process of education; the pictorial mind is the primitive mind and expresses itself emotionally. We have an almost perfect example of the pictorial mind in Mr. Grey. I know nothing of his ancestry. Mr. Grey obviously has a picture of slavering sub-humans with sickles in their teeth and hammers in their hands, and the vision frightens him to death. Mr. Paul Robeson is too modest in his estimate of the ability of a great artist to think in abstract terms.

Mr. Robeson is, of course, right when he states that Western technology will not function except in a Socialist framework. What he appears to have overlooked is that education suffers from the same disabilities, and that capitalist education tends to encourage the pictorial mind except in certain very specialised directions. W. Durell

White House, Southborough.

## KILLING THE AIR MAIL

Sir,—Air mail conditions definitely retard air mail progress. When a letter dispatched from Berlin by 11.30 p.m. 'plane arriving in London between 5 and 6 a.m., franked for express delivery, can only be delivered at 10 a.m., one is not encouraged. This has happened to us every day during the last week.

On Saturday night we tried Air Freight from Berlin. The letter packet franked for 6*s.* 8*d.* arrived at Croydon before 10 a.m., but only after much telephoning with Imperial Airways reached Victoria Station at 12.30 noon, when a fee of 13*s.* 8*d* was charged, made up as follows: Fee Berlin–London, 6*s.* 8*d*; Customs clearance, 2*s.* 6*d*; cartage, 2*s.* 6*d.*; C.C.O.T. (whatever this means), 2*s.*; or Berlin–Croydon by air, 6*s.* 8*d.*; Croydon–London by road, 7*s.*! And the Imperial Airways has a subsidy out of the people's pockets in order that it may foster air use!

13 Orange Street, W.C.2. Mondiale

## INTERNATIONAL PEACE CAMPAIGN

Sir,—We think it very important that women as well as men of all countries should support the International Peace Congress to be held at Brussels from the 3rd to the 6th of September, and we hope that every women's organisation—guilds, Trade Unions, Church Societies, etc., will send delegates.

Rose Macaulay — Margaret Kennedy
Eva M. Hubback — Rosamond Lehmann
Phyllis Bentley — Rhondda

# Miscellany

## CATALAN CONTRETEMPS

Over a glass of porto in the VIIIe arrondissement we were assured that there was a regular "revolution" every Saturday and Sunday evening at the Etoile. The austere grey façades of this Nationalist quarter were sulkily shuttered, but flaunted bright tricolours in protest against the Front Populaire. Round the Etoile every side-street was packed with gendarmes, gardes mobiles and troops standing expectantly by their lorries and piled arms. The evening papers burst out at that moment, proclaiming a military revolt in Spanish Morocco. We ought perhaps to have realised that the "something serious" which they had been expecting in Spain since the February elections had actually begun to happen. But personally I had always found it hard to believe in a Fascist menace beyond the Pyrenees. The forces of reaction in the Peninsula were, I knew, strong, blind and unscrupulous; yet they obviously lacked cohesion and courage, whereas the Left was not only powerful but enthusiastic. True, the Spaniard invariably loses energy as soon as he attains his immediate objectives; lassitude overcomes the powers that misgovern Spain at any given moment; and sooner or later the other side kicks out sharply against the pricks. In any case it seemed to me certain that a Nationalist disturbance in July, 1936, would be as short-lived as Sanjurjo's monarchist coup of August 10th, 1932. It would be merely a repetition—in reverse—of the troubles of October, 1934: in the big towns the movement would collapse as quickly as did Companys's miserable gesture of Catalan independence, while in Morocco itself Fascist officers might hold out a week or so longer, as had the Red miners in Asturias. Besides, our tickets were in my pocket, and traffic across the frontier appeared to be normal.

It was a very long train that waited for almost an hour at the French frontier station: a Swiss entrant for the People's Olympiad at Barcelona had no passport. Then, on the Spanish side, officialdom despatched us with unaccustomed speed into the calm sunshine. For over three hours a pitched battle had been raging at the other end of the line; but no one at Port-Bou appeared to have heard of it. At Gerona small khaki figures patrolled a raised platform in the heat with rifles at the ready, their fixed bayonets presumably marking the fine distinction between the State of Alarm and a State of War. Later we realised that they were the rebels. . . .

At the next station a railwayman yelled to a friend: "Oh yes, there's a big show on in Barcelona—didn't you know?" It was the first we had heard of it. After that our reluctant train ran slower and slower, and stopped more often. At Moncada-Reixach, an hour late, it stopped altogether. The local pub produced a good meal; the engine and the pair of Civil Guards that had been attached to our train left it; the radio roared that everything was quiet, that all closed shutters would be fired on, that a general strike had been declared, that the rebellion was completely crushed. Midday slipped into afternoon, evening, night. Life became a question of patience and rumours. Rumours, the Generalitat declared, were anti-patriotic. . . . The next station was San Andrés, a suburb of Barcelona, where three freight trains blocked our way and the bombardment of a rebel barracks threatened. An artillery barracks, with a powder magazine. . . . It was best for the train to wait in Moncada until this had exploded. We would proceed early next morning.

Shortly before dawn a loud explosion filled the train with smoke and panic. But it was only a bomb in the church nearby, and firing anyway had been continuous since nightfall in the hills separating Moncada from the sea and along the road that winds over a rise, past a convenient cemetery, into the village. Here five rebel officers—a lieutenant-colonel, a major, and three lieutenants—found their escape blocked by a barrier of tree-trunks. They were wearing overalls, and hidden in their powerful car with a French number-plate was a twenty-foot chain fitted with grappling hooks. I talked to one of their executioners next day at the café—a one-eyed Murcian who advocated the same swift justice for the whole main street of Moncada. "All these shopkeepers are Fascists," he told me. The major remarked: "Do what you like with us. We don't care whether we live or die. We've lost 4,000 men."* One of the lieutenants jerked his hands free and escaped, mortally wounded; his body was found in the woods two days later. "The others didn't even say 'ay'!" the Murcian informed us. "Never opened their mouths." "At least they were brave men," I suggested—like a fool. It was an unpopular remark. "They were guilty, you mean," a bystander said. "*Claro*," I agreed, and walked off to watch a Government plane bombing the rebel barracks: a speck and puffs of smoke six miles away.

That day nothing happened. Little boys played with tattered vestments in the débris of the church. A decapitated statue of the Virgin was jogged along the street for a walk. Everything was quiet—except for the orators of the Generalitat and the incessant blare of motor horns, as cars commandeered by the Anti-Fascist militia, bristling with guns, a careless finger on every trigger, and smeared with the initials C.N.T., F.A.I., U.G.T., raced through the village on errands or joy-rides: toot, toot, toot—friends, don't shoot! One brought back the corpse of a proletarian sentry killed by the machine-gun bullets of insurgents escaping (despite the barricades?) by car.

There were some 200 of us stranded in Moncada. We were a representative lot, varied enough in appearance to delight the heart of any casting-director with an eye for typical faces. Besides the hordes of Swiss and Alsatian athletes, and the Hungarian water-polo team, bound for the Popular Games, there were sixteen English chorus-girls, readily dismayed and soon reassured; a gentle pedagogue from Madrid University, fluent in four languages; a silent Finn (he only spoke Finnish, and so for three days preserved a wonderful mute dignity); a pregnant Belgian; a mumbling, lugubrious Turk; an English couple straight out of the *Tatler*—guardee moustache, suède brogues, reservations at the Ritz and the Formentor—and three American big-businessmen in the Pullman, unbelieving and bored, who suddenly contrived to bribe their way out to the frontier—at enormous cost and great, if unrealised, risk—much to the disgust of their four more enlightened compatriots, one of whom, an impassioned, bespectacled Jew, had previously collected 150 pesetas among the passengers as a gift to the village Anarchosyndicalist Committee of Defence. It was to this body, named the Comité Revolucionario (presumably after the revolution of 1931), that our frequent deputations, usually headed by two incensed and energetic Italians, appealed for any form of conveyance or safe-conduct to Barcelona. (The *alcalde* and the stationmaster were as helpless as we were; telegraph and telephone had ceased to exist.) Rebuffed, the elder Italian would return to shave ceremoniously on the platform or to harangue loiterers on the philosophical and practical aspects of revolution, efficiency and organisation; he showed a fine grasp of his subject, coupled with profound ignorance of the Spanish character. As Fascists, he and his brother were in a peculiarly awkward position—but they refused to realise it. One diminutive and finicky, the other sharp as a hatchet, they provided comic relief of a high order, without which our three days of boredom, hope, discouragement and exasperation at Moncada would have been doubly wearisome.

Ushered into the presence of the *Sindicatos*, politely, at the point of a pistol, we faced a sort of board-meeting across a table littered with revolvers instead of telephones . . . and were led out again, fortified by a selection of different and definite promises. As the train could not be moved and buses from Barcelona never arrived, were we free to cover the 13 kilometres into town on foot? They wouldn't advise it. But the whole of Cataluña was calm? Oh, completely! Then might we not go at our own risk? Well, no . . . an armed escort would have to be provided, and none of their men could be spared for the job just at present—the situation was too uncertain. Besides, six large autocars were already on their way to collect us. . . .

We retired to watch the sacking of a convent and the "expropriation" of a couple of villas by a score of urchins who threw furniture from the upper windows, to the merry accompaniment of splintering glass. Next day the town-crier announced in Castilian and Catalan that "the fight for freedom was not a matter of theft and pillage." Offenders would be summarily punished.

The Civil Guards reappeared, sleepless and dignified.

The new school—a detached, two-storied building, complete with shower-baths, clean lavatories and wash-basins, the work of the Republic—was placed at our disposal by the dark, intelligent little schoolmaster. Within three hours it was as dirty as the train. The Swiss athletes, the English chorus, the

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* Or, according to a later version, "We've killed 200 of your people."

American sporting political press made it their headquarters. *Les girls* refused to put on their act, the Swiss played football; on the blackboard someone wrote *Viva España, pais de turismo!* —but this irony was indignantly erased, the hammer and sickle and *Visca Catalunya!* substituted.

Tuesday was marked by two events of interest: the village priest was discovered in hiding and shot, and three small lorries turned up for the Olympic competitors. A violent and degrading skirmish ensued for the vacant places. The polyglot German militiaman in charge of the convoy swore that he'd return to fetch us next morning. A gaunt, handsome young Anarchist, leaning on his red-ribboned rifle, told us delightedly: "We've wiped Barcelona clean—there's not a bed-bug left. Goded's a prisoner in Capitania General."

"But we'd heard that he'd committed suicide!"

"No" (with a grin), "we'll suicide him ourselves—later."

There was much excited whispering round our compartment that night. It was very dark. A priest from Gerona, hunted and disguised, had taken refuge in our coach. He had confessed his identity to a frightened railway official, who didn't hand him over to the C.N.T., but implored him to clear out. One was uncomfortably aware of his recent terrified presence, the spoor of a hunted animal. . . . He was still dodging about the train somewhere. If he returned. . . . I caught sight of him for a moment, a wizened little man in horn-rimmed spectacles leaning against a truck.

Thanks to the Civil Guard, and to a young Englishman on a bicycle who kindly served as our liaison with Barcelona, the remaining fifty-odd refugees eventually left Moncada in three lorries under cheerful Anarchist protection. Sprawling precariously on a mountain of luggage, we jolted over the hills in the sunshine, laughing—while a youth on the roof of the lorry behind ours aimed a rifle at our necks. "Point that thing at the landscape, can't you?" yelled the jolliest member of our guard, adding: "If only we could meet a few rebels! We'd show you how the F.A.I. fights against Fascism!" We agreed to take his word for it. "Ever see such magnificent country? When we've bought it with our lives, Spain will be rich."

Over parapets of square cobbles in San Andrés waved the red and black Anarchist flag. We swung through forests of raised fists, past mounds of refuse, the empty, bullet-spattered barracks and, on several walls, the cryptic sign: B. 73854 *Cruz Roja Fascista.* Our driver offered to drop us at the Ritz—which was now a hospital.

Devastated Barcelona was just as it's been described. Dirtier and noisier than usual. Convents blazing like bonfires, the occasional crack of a sniper's rifle, small shell-holes and looted tobacconists.

Assault guards offered us a lift down to the docks. On board H.M.S. *London* was Claud Cockburn, flushed with triumph and full of news; together we watched the French packet *Djenné* leave port to the strains of the *Internationale,* then he hurried back to the front. Outside the harbour in the destroyer *Gipsy,* bound for Marseilles, the crew stood to attention as we sped past two Italian warships newly returned, like herself, from Alexandria. . . . Despite the incomparable warmth of naval hospitality, it seemed a pity to be leaving Spain so soon—and tragic to leave her torn in two unreconcilable halves, her tentative democracy ruined beyond repair, and doomed, whatever the outcome, to an inevitable agony of savage reprisals.

JOHN MARKS

# THE SALZBURG FESTIVAL

It is many years since I was last at Salzburg, and the annual summer musical festival has developed greatly since that time. The operas and some of the concerts used to be held in the attractive Stadt Theatre, but a special Festspielhaus was constructed in 1925 out of the old winter riding school and the opera performances all take place there now. It is a spacious building with a pleasantly large foyer and entrance hall. The latter is decorated with modern frescoes of no particular merit, but the general atmosphere is gay.

This is, of course, largely due to its position at the foot of the Mönchsberg on the left side of the river, although there is hardly any part of the town of Salzburg which is not attractive if, indeed, not positively beautiful. Alexander von Humboldt declared that the surroundings of Salzburg vied with those of Naples and Constantinople for the most beautiful in the world. It can hardly be an exaggeration, for it would indeed be difficult to find either a position or a city more beautiful and more unspoilt than Salzburg. Apart from the fact that most of it is of eighteenth century or earlier construction (and what marvellous building it is compared with twentieth-century building!), it has been beautified in recent years by the acquisition of the Schloss Mirabell and its gardens as a public park almost in the middle of the town. The gaiety of colouring due to the painted stucco buildings and the abundance of flowers is quite extraordinary.

So far I have heard Toscanini conduct *Fidelio* and *Die Meistersinger*. It is a strange and unexpected fact that in the case of Toscanini merit and reputation are equal. It is perhaps the only example existent to-day of such a coincidence. Nevertheless it would be too much to believe that even the literary men who write about music, men of such real distinction, for example, as Thomas Mann—are truly aware of the rare excellence of Toscanini. I mention Thomas Mann because I have just read an article by him in *Die Bühne* on Bruno Walter. It is written, I am told, in a remarkably good German style, of which as a foreigner I can only partially judge; but what strikes me about his praise of Bruno Walter—whom we all know to be a very good conductor—is that it is so literary and psychological. Reading an article in the *Neue Freie Presse* of Vienna on the Meistersinger performance I am struck with the same thing. In fact the Viennese critic, in spite of extreme praise, very nearly blames Toscanini for an inclination to treat the singers as if they were so many additional instruments. I suppose there is a possibility of a conflict of opinion on this matter; it may be that in some cases the rôle of the singers demands a special treatment. But I can hardly believe when this actually were the case that Toscanini would not be aware of it. The reproach, mild as it was, seems to me to show a certain obtuseness (which I find also in Thomas Mann), for the real peculiarity of Toscanini is that he is the most *musical* of all living conductors. This is noticeable in everything he does and it made the first act of *Fidelio* memorable by its sheer musical beauty; whereas under the majority of good conductors whose musicality is mixed with dramatic sense, psychology, feeling for effects and I don't know what other extraneous elements, one feels that the first act of *Fidelio* is for the most part imitative of the Italian operatic conventions current in Beethoven's day. But so musically sensitive is Toscanini that the score becomes alive and we hear it as Beethoven imagined it with a truly personal and not a conventional expression.

Owing to an indisposition of Lotte Lehmann the part of Leonora was taken by Anni Konetzni, a well-known Wagnerian singer and a pupil of Kasyowska, as Lehmann is. She has a good voice and as a Wagner singer is possibly irreproachable, but her singing in *Fidelio* lacked both subtlety and fire. The tenor, Kolman von Pataky, who is familiar to Glyndebourne audiences, was a good Florestan and Alfred Jerger's Pizarro was very effective. Luise Helletsgruber was the Mazelline and she is always good; altogether the cast was a satisfactory one, but it was the ensemble singing and the orchestral playing under Toscanini which lifted the performance above the average good festival level. The production by Lothar Wallerstein was always sound and effective.

The *Meistersinger* began at five and ended a little before eleven with one interval of forty and one of thirty minutes, performed without any cuts. It was most exhausting to listen to and it must have been a terrible trial of strength for the seventy-year-old Toscanini. I met a member of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra the following day and he asked me what I thought of *Die Meistersinger*. "I hate it," I replied, whereupon he laughed and said that one could not imagine how tiring it was to play in it for five hours on end (he was a string player). "Oh yes, I can," I replied, "it is always the same thing over and over again and an almost everlasting four beats to the bar." "But you musn't say a word against it here," he then said, "for Wagner is a god to the Germans"; then he added: "but of course we know they have other and better gods—Mozart, Beethoven, etc."

Listening to *Die Meistersinger* under Toscanini one heard many musical things that one had never heard before and he never allowed it to drag as most conductors do, yet, notwithstanding this, every note was clear and the basses, for example, had a quite unusual liveliness. It is now a great pleasure to look forward to the forthcoming performance of *Falstaff* under Toscanini. This is a score which will repay him and also gives the audience who have ears to hear a lively *musical* feast.

W. J. TURNER

# PLAYS AND PICTURES

## "The Amazing Dr. Clitterhouse," at the Haymarket

This is an unusually shocking and enjoyable entertainment. We are shown a young doctor becoming a burglar in order—says he—to write a book on the physiology of crime. The gusto with which he goes about his jobs suggests that he is getting a quite unscientific kick out of the excitement, and that he ought to be investigating his condition by psycho-analysis rather than by blood-tests. In any case, he infects us with his own enjoyment, and we keep hoping that he won't be caught by the horrid police. In the last act he rises from burglary to murder, and we begin to wonder how the author is going to get away with a happy ending. In *Ten Minute Alibi* the hero was allowed to murder a White Slaver with impunity. Are we to be similarly encouraged to abolish our blackmailers? We are not. A perfunctory homage is paid to morality, and the doctor is arrested but declared mad. Edgar Wallace, in fact, gives way to Pirandello, for we leave the theatre arguing about whether or not we were intended to believe in his insanity. The author, Mr. Barré Lyndon, is up to every possible stage dodge, and has been admirably served by Mr. Claud Gurney, the producer, and a cast without one weak member. Mr. Ralph Richardson gives the doctor all the boyish charm of Mr. Herbert Marshall, and adds an oddity which might indeed be madness. Mr. Charles Mortimer, Mr. Victor Stanley, Mr. Hugh Wright and Miss Meriel Forbes do their character parts to perfection. As amusing as it is exciting, this play will still be corrupting schoolboy morals during the Christmas holidays.

## "Zero," at the Embassy

It is possible that Mr. Limpus, who presents this play, has leased the Embassy for the holiday season, for certainly the cachet that most plays have at this theatre is sadly lacking here. This curious world, in which a Riviera hotel has a *vestiaire* designated as *manteaux*, and the Casino at Monte Carlo sells "White Ladies" of a pale brown colour served in tumblers, is, perhaps, in keeping with an innocent wife who, having run away from her husband, stays in the same hotel with him for weeks without coming across him, then takes the money her friend has won at the tables and given her for safe keeping and flings it wildly *en plein* on Zero, which turns up three times running. Marked for various qualities, the play has Zero for dramatic situation, Zero for dialogue, Zero for probability and Zero for character-knowledge. What good actors like Mr. Wyndham Goldie and Mr. Martin Walker are doing in this *galère* it is difficult to say, but they pay the penalty for taking such poor parts by seeming to become poor actors in them. Miss Jane Baxter looked charming, and Miss Sunday Wilshin contributed the kind of advertisement girl for the South of France she can turn out with a flick of her finger-nail, but it is a most melancholy evening's entertainment.

## "Le Pavillon," at Covent Garden

M. Lichine is a dancer who imposes himself rather by the expressiveness of his movements than by an impeccable technique. He is at his best as the lover in *Présages*, the Dandy in *Le Beau Danube*, the Marquis in *The Three-cornered Hat*. It is odd, therefore, that in the choreography of his new ballet, *Le Pavillon*, he reverts to the inexpressive pre-Fokine style, in which there is much virtuosity but no character. Some of the fast movements are effective, but most of the dancing is platitudinous and signifies nothing. A ballet does not require a story, but it must have atmosphere, it must infect the audience with a mood. *Le Pavillon* is as uninfectious and as sterile as a dentist's tools. Riabouchinska danced with her usual proficiency. Baronova had a thankless role, and Lichine himself received an ovation. The music—Borodin piano-pieces arranged for orchestra—is sometimes very charming, sometimes as empty as the movements which have been set for it. Mr. Cecil Beaton's scenery does nothing to save the situation. A Strawberry Hill kiosk illuminated from within fatigues the eye by its brightness, and makes it difficult to see the less well-lit dancers in front of it. The repetition of its diamond panes in the trunks of the trees is ingenious and very pleasing. The costumes, inexorably blue, look as if they had been taken from expensive Christmas crackers. In *Apparitions* at Sadler's Wells, Mr. Beaton showed delicate taste and vigorous imagination. But for some reason in *Le Pavillon* he has merely flopped. Altogether a disappointing ballet, unpoetic, frigid and trivial.

## "Rhythm on the Range," at the Carlton

In its infant days the cinema liked the West wild, with shots first and questions afterwards. In its adolescence it prefers the West to croon. *Rhythm on the Range* presents Bing Crosby, Public Crooner No. 1, as a cowboy who wins a bull, a delightful creature known as Cuddly, and has quite a lot of trouble taking him to a ranch across the continent. The trouble is caused less by the bull than by an errant heiress, Frances Farmer, who runs out on her engagement, to show she's the stuff "pioneer women" are made of, and stows away in Crosby and Cuddly's train. Despite a touching moment when Crosby sings the bull to sleep and a spot of bother with a red scarf which ends with the bull chasing the girl and Crosby chasing the bull, the journey is decidedly tedious. Not till the arrival at the ranch in the last reel does it wake up. Then the credit is partly due to a comedienne who is new to us, Martha Raye. Her large mouth and grotesque humour are a very welcome relief, and her singing of a hot number is the brightest moment in the whole film. If the pace at which it closes had been achieved and maintained from the start, *Rhythm on the Range* would have been good entertainment. As it is, it will satisfy only the Crosby fans.

## "Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves," at Studio No. 2 and the Piccadilly News Theatre

The escapist functions of the cinema have so throttled its growth that in future years we shall probably look back and marvel at the possibilities for film art and entertainment which were never explored. The synthetic one-reeler (cartoon, puppet, abstract, etc.) has suffered in particular, due, oddly enough, to the excellence of Walt Disney, whose supremacy has blinded the exhibitor to other possibilities in this field. A puppet film *Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves*, by the Hungarian George Pal, is being shown this week for the first time in England although it was made a year or so ago. It is in Gaspar-colour and in many ways carries the marks of an elementary film; the puppet is less intimate than Mickey Mouse and the story not too well told. Nevertheless, it should be seen by those interested in the development of this type of film. Pal himself has just completed an advertising film for Horlicks which will be shown here around October, the Russian Ptusko's *The New Gulliver* made a great advance, and in Germany Gebrüder Diehl are working hard on puppet pictures. Here, Len Lye has made a remarkable puppet film for Shell. The possibilities of a quota affecting shorts, which is being investigated by a Government Committeee, may greatly aid this type of film.

# THE COMING WEEK

FRIDAY, August 14th—
"Ante-Room," Queen's Theatre.

SATURDAY, August 15th—
Athletics. British Empire *v.* U.S.A., White City.
Cricket. England *v.* All India (3rd Test Match,) The Oval.

MONDAY, August 17th—
"Escape Me Never," Everyman Cinema.

FRIDAY, August 21st—
Socialist League Meeting in support of the Spanish Workers in their fight against Fascism. Chairman: William Mellor. Speakers: H. N. Brailsford, J. F. Horrabin, George Elvin and a Comrade recently returned from Barcelona. Entire proceeds to be given to the fund to fight the Spanish rebels. Essex Hall, Essex Street, Strand, 8.

# Current Literature

## BOOKS IN GENERAL

THE history of the earth, which can be read in its smashed and contorted rocks, was at one time interpreted as a series of cataclysmic convulsions, but geology did not become an intelligible and ordered science until the ideas of the Catastrophists were discarded for those of the Huttonians—until men were prepared to try to see whether everything which has occurred in the past cannot be explained as the result of causes which are still in operation in some part or other of the globe. This simple assumption, that we should explain the unknown by the familiar, is sufficient to unravel the story of volcanic basalt and sedimentary sandstone, of wind-blown dunes and glaciated valleys, and it is just as necessary if we are studying the shorter period of human history and men instead of mud. If we want to know how and why human societies have changed, we must study how and why they are changing to-day; if we want to know how men felt in the past, we must imagine men now alive in their positions. This is the most elementary truism in the study of history, yet it is continually neglected by historians and historical novelists. Indeed, the reason why *War and Peace* is far above all other historical novels is because Leo Tolstoy was an inspired Huttonian; he filled his pages with portraits of men and women who are not types but living individual people. The characters of *War and Peace* are therefore not dated. They are as alive and as credible after seventy years as when the book was written. After *War and Peace* Leo Tolstoy began to write a novel on the subject of *Peter the Great*, but unfortunately abandoned it. It would have been very different from the novel on the same subject by his son—*Peter the Great*, by Alexei Tolstoi, translated by Edith Bone and Emile Burns (Gollancz, 16*s*.)—for even in the sixties Leo Tolstoy's sympathies would scarcely have been entirely with Peter.

* * *

The story of Peter the Great is filled with a special significance to-day, since it was he who began the internal struggle, the secret civil war that has divided Russia ever since, the fight between the powerful minority, frequently in control of the Government, determined to westernise Russia, and the vast mass of the people who clung steadfastly to the ancient Russian ways of life. The history of Russia is not the history of a class struggle, but of two cultural ideas. That extremely illuminating book, *The Economic History of Russia*, by James Mavor (Dent), traces this conflict down to twenty years ago and makes it abundantly clear why the Communism of the towns introduced by the Bolsheviks could not revive the ancient village communism of the peasants, but had to root out its last traces before building up a communistic life of its own sort. The struggle is over now, it seems, after two centuries and a half of ruthless slave-driving and oppression, but if the victory is permanent it will have been won more by the village schoolmasters than by the punitive expeditions and firing squads. And in this conflict almost everyone capable of expression has been on the same side. The occasion some time in the second half of the nineteenth century when the Metropolitan of Tver raided the hospital and buried various wax anatomical models from the medical school in consecrated ground is perhaps as good an expression of the old conservatism as we can find. But for the most part the resistance was passive.

> Ah, in the old days people could just sit at the window, and if they felt like it, they ate an apple, and if they didn't they just listened to the church bells. It had been peaceful for centuries. A whirlwind had come and people now were running about like ants when boiling water is poured over their ant-heap. It was incomprehensible.

Such is the reflection of the old boyar who has had his beard cut off and has been dressed up in foreign clothes and a wig, by order of the Tsar.

Alexei Tolstoi does not often pause long enough to make the issues so clear. His tale is one of violence and confusion and he overwhelms the reader with wave after wave of violent and confusing incident. Thus *Peter the Great* is altogether too much like a battle staged in Hollywood; one sees swirling, fighting crowds of men, regiments being wiped out and ships being launched. And in every scene, the huge clumsy figure of Peter continually reappears, always in a desperate state of excitement or emotion. He runs away naked in the snow, forges an anchor of a ship, gets drunk in the German colony. Yet he remains a superficial figure: we never know why he is playing the part he does, and his emotions are really as obscure as his motives, for we cannot see inside him. This perhaps is inevitable and might be forgiven if we were shown the feelings of any of the other characters clearly—if there were a Prince André, or a Pierre Bezuhov or even a Dolohov. But the subsidiary characters in *Peter the Great* are shadows, and shadows always in a hurry. Some of the scenes are extremely fine and remain vividly in one's mind. The most unforgettable passages, however, appear in quotation marks, so that one assumes that Tolstoi has merely transcribed them.

> Apparently with the object of proving that the walls of the town, into which the streltsi desired to penetrate, are sacred and inviolable, the Tsar has ordered beams to be pushed through the embrasures, and two rebels to be hanged on each. Two hundred were executed in this way to-day. It is unlikely that any town ever had such a peculiar fence round it as the hanged streltsi formed round Moscow.

The streltsi were a privileged military order and their rebellion was put down with frightful butchery, Peter forcing all the senators and boyars to act as executioners, so that all should be bound together by shedding blood. He looked on while three hundred and thirty men were beheaded at the same time, though with varying degrees of unskilfulness, by the amateur headsmen. It was about this time that the Danish Ambassador's clerks visited Preobrajensk out of curiosity, saw three huts swimming in blood and poked their noses into a fourth from which frightful screams were coming.

> But no sooner had they entered when they rushed out again in terror, for they had come upon the Tsar and his boyars. The Tsar was standing in front of a naked man hanging from the ceiling; he turned round as they came in, obviously extremely displeased that foreigners should find him thus occupied.

The process of westernising has frequently been carried out in a manner somewhat at variance with the spirit of progress.

It is perhaps unfair to compare the work of Alexei Tolstoi with that of his father, and there would be no point in doing so if he merely lacked his father's power. Alexei's failure, however, in *Peter the Great* seems to me to be because he has ignored what I may call the Huttonian outlook and has reverted to the vague and confused explanations of the Catastrophists. Nothing familiar is shown us. A pieman, a peasant, a boyar, are picked out, but they are specimens, not individuals, and their springs of action remain mysterious and confused. The book is not helped by the translation, which one reads with distrust. Thus the Circassians are represented as fighting with "lariats," the streltsi are armed with "pole-axes," and one speculates as to what sort of "fishes' teeth" were given as presents to the Sultan of Turkey. Perhaps narwhal tusks are meant and the vagueness is the author's. Incidentally, Prince George Lewis was not heir to the throne of England when Peter the Great met him near Hanover. Queen Anne had not come to the throne and her son the Duke of Gloucester was alive. It is a sign of a book's weakness when the reader is able to notice unimportant little details like these. Yet I do recommend *Peter the Great*, with the provision that it is not a masterpiece. And another book I recommend is by Peter Fleming's companion on his journey through Tartary, Mlle. Kini Maillart. It is called *Turkestan Solo* and the price has been reduced so that it is a bargain (Putnams, 5*s*.). It gives a most fascinating picture of the westernising of Turkestan by the Russian Communists to-day, who are much nicer people to meet, and much easier to believe in, than Peter the Great.

DAVID GARNETT

# NEW NOVELS

**They Walk in the City.** By J. B. PRIESTLEY. *Heinemann.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

**Clochemerle.** By GABRIEL CHEVALLIER. *Secker and Warburg.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

**Rising Tide.** By ELISAVETA FEN. *Macmillan.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

Mr. Priestley is probably by now the most securely established of English writers. One doubts if a drop more or a drop less praise can at this date greatly move one so solidly entrenched. He is practically a national institution; and being of an energetic, open, lively turn of mind, with his finger firmly on the pulse of contemporary events, humorous, and with an admirably direct clear-cut style, it is a pretty safe bet that he will not rapidly write himself out or fail to maintain his own high standard as an observer. But other writers share his qualities without his popularity. There is something else he has: a peculiar ability to interpret Englishness. Ever since he invented those Companions, his readers have felt safe with him; and the English, owing to deep-seated uneasiness, melancholy and distrust of their fellow-beings, set great store by feeling safe. Here at last, they say, is a modern writer who believes in the essential wholesomeness and niceness of life. Things are like that really: we always hoped so, and now here is Mr. Priestley to tell us so. What a relief.

But if Mr. Priestley will forgive my saying so, his motives even then seemed to me suspect. He was with a certain amount of deliberation taking in his credulous audience; or, to put it in another way, not writing from his own true centre. He was not, is not, that friend to humanity he superficially appears; and that is what, to my mind, made *The Good Companions* so unsatisfactory a novel. No doubt he is sick and tired of being reminded that he wrote it; and I only mention it as a preamble to stating what I feel to be the same clue to the unsatisfactoriness of his latest and more complex novel, *They Walk in the City*. The pair of nice young lovers, Edward and Rose, are subject to the most extraordinary series of trick-coincidences, Maskelyne vanishings and reappearances, that ever cut across the structure of a sober realistic novel about the backbone (middle and lower end) of England. In and out they stray and wander, with a brave show of being at home in the world and able to keep their places; but round every corner a fresh pit yawns suddenly and swallows them up. It is surely not too jargon-minded or over-fanciful to detect an unconscious symbolism in their inability to find each other; or, when they have, to remain together. When they are, at long last, allowed to be united, it is in such melodramatic unconvincing circumstances, that they seem to fade away and dissolve hand in hand before our eyes. It is as if Mr. Priestley did not himself deeply believe in their place in his scheme; or as if his determination to provide a happy ending had been in insoluble conflict with the machine he invented and set going. The very speech of Rose and Edward is without a particle of the flavour which distinguishes that of the other figures, and remains quite amorphous and insipid.

For the rest, it continues to be true that "characters" are more in Mr. Priestley's line than is character. We are chiefly aware of the idiosyncrasies of their physical appearance and speech. The author is never far away from them and seems to feel for them a kind of indulgent contempt: in this more closely resembling Thackeray than Dickens, to whom he is so frequently compared.

What gives the book importance is the solid, firm efficiency of the whole construction. It is like a stout plum pudding in which the horseshoe, the sixpence, the boot and the donkey are sparsely distributed and apt to evade one. But after all it is the pudding which makes the meal. Nobody is better able to describe the actuality of provincial towns fallen on bad times, of factories, of buildings housing "little insurance men, corset agents, widowed women and their lodgers." No one understands better the social grades and conventions in the office-clerk, tea-shop, greyhound racing, cheap amusement hall, third-rate touring company world. No one can throw a more disconcerting light on a small, slightly shady, far-from-prosperous business concern. His observation is brilliantly acute, and the picture he presents, though generally humorous, fills one with despair. Listen to this:

> A region of shops, rubbishy Belvedere Trading Company garments, of dusty meat and flyblown biscuits and rotting oranges, of pawnbrokers' shops and funeral parlours and dingy little shops, of Racing Specials and cough mixtures and barrow-loads of bananas, of morning queues for films about an imaginary Wild West, of colds and adenoids and pregnancy and prolapsus. The café was a typical establishment of its kind; neither pleasantly foreign nor decently English, the exiled Italian peasants who kept it being under the impression that it was very English, and its Cockney customers firmly believing that this was the Italian way of doing things. It began as a shop, selling the usual packets of cigarettes and slabs of chocolate; then it sprouted an urn or two and displayed some soggy buns; then it changed altogether into a place of refreshment.

Here is The Waste Land itself. There is, too, an extremely moving and painful description of a hospital.

Far be it from me to quarrel with Mr. Priestley's affection for pleasant, sane, honest people, or his belief in their courage, kindliness and patience. Cheerfulness will keep breaking through; but I wish all the same that he would once—just once—forget his popularity, allow his strong vein of misanthropy free play, and give us the large-scale satire that seems always about to slip from the tip of his pen.

From the Englishness of Mr. Priestley we turn to the Gallicism of Mr. Chevallier. *Clochemerle* is the English version of a remarkable and highly individual French novel. The translation, by Jocelyn Godefroi, is an excellent piece of work, preserving as it does the pungent, stinging masculine flavour which doubtless distinguishes the original. There is just one word that bothers me: namely the term "glitter" applied to the "aura" surrounding the young girl about to become a mother. Surely "glitter" gives a wrong, harsh, chemical impression? But this is a detail. Mr. Chevallier has built the chronicles of Clochemerle round the erection, by a crafty, opportunist, anti-clerical Mayor, of the village's first urinal. This notable convenience is made the focusing point of a train of disturbances radiating outwards until the whole of European politics is involved.

> "We will disarm some other time. We've got to attend to Clochemerle."
>
> And thus it was that the Disarmament Conference of 1923 came to naught. The destiny of nations hangs indeed by a mere thread. If Adèle Torbayon had been less voluptuous, Tardivaux less enterprising, Arthur Torbayon less easily offended, Foucimayne less fickle and Putet less malignant, perchance the fate of the world had been other than it is.

The events leading up to this conclusion are varied and diverting to a degree. This is what would commonly be described as a book to suit the male palate, like Rabelais, or old brandy and cigars. The wit is free and coarse yet endearing in that un-English way of which Sterne yet remains a shining example. However, Mr. Chevallier is considerably more explicit than Sterne, and far more unkind. No matter how large or small the rôle of his players, not for one moment does he allow us to remain in ignorance of their sexual attributes and qualifications. With pagan glee he directs our attention to anatomical secrets, amorous conquests or reverses, conjugal prowess or lack of enterprise. No one is spared a stripping. All motives and actions are explained in these terms. Nature is personified as a kind of presiding deity with voluptuous feminine endowments, and given an important part in the sequence of catastrophes. The sly, occasionally malevolent, faunish humour of the method, the comedy of the result, carry the reader forward from page to page with the utmost zest. The village and its inhabitants rise up before us with disturbing clarity. The satire, for the most part cool but occasionally savage, widens out to embrace the entire social structure. This book is strongly to be recommended to those who are partial to a relish. Its only fault is a tendency to diffuseness and repetition, especially towards the end.

*Rising Tide* makes seasonable reading. Turning from the papers with their headlines: Ruthlessness in Spain; Massacres in the Streets; attempting to picture the pattern of daily life for the average citizen in the seat of civil war, one is impressed by this straightforward detached account, written by one who obviously underwent the kind of experiences she relates, of what it *is* like: at least for a section of society. In this case the civil war is the Russian one: the action takes place in a Black Sea city occupied by the Reds, the Whites, the Reds again; the section of society is that of the cultured bourgeois. Friends and relations disappear into prison, are let out again or shot for revolutionary or counter-revolutionary activities. The heroine, Irina, barters her chemise for bread in the market. Refugees huddle on to foreign ships or get left behind. It is not safe to walk in the streets. The machine-gun breaks out suddenly, a body drops by the front door; in the early morning, before the obliteration of rain and traffic, the blood of last night's slaughter makes a trail in the streets from the prison gates. Meanwhile, owing to the instinctive determination of people to preserve at all costs some line of continuity, life somehow goes on as usual as long as it can. The young make love, go swimming, have parties; Natalia practises to be a ballerina, Irina makes her debut as a violinist at a Workers' Club concert. It is a glimpse of "the end of their short-lived, exclusive, highly complex Russian culture, the exquisite flower of a few days, paradoxically crowning the great dung-heap of peasant Russia. The rich fertile dung-heap, full of potentialities, but dormant and unutilised." The main theme is the frustrated love between Irina and a young engineer, a mysterious, fatal, romantic character who is finally imprisoned and put to death. The chapter in which she and his mistress dress up as nurses in order to attend an operation upon him in prison is horribly moving. The book is without propaganda, bitterness, morbidness or irony, and has the evenly distributed balance, the broad, somehow light surface and simple, plentiful characterisation which one associates with Russian novels. The general impression is of a sane, sympathetic and equable temperament. Irina's final "way out" rather misses fire. The moral conclusions are imposed and a little banal. And unfortunately there is no quality in the writing. Like so many other good, sensitive, competent novelists, Miss Fen has no particular care or feeling for words; and it is this which prevents her interesting story from leaving the mark it should upon the imagination. ROSAMOND LEHMANN

## EVENTFUL LIVES

**Tempest Over Mexico.** By ROSA KING. *Methuen.* 10s. 6*d.*
**The Whole World and Company.** By GRETCHEN GREEN. *Constable.* 10s.
**Sailing Troubadour.** By B. J. KLITGAARD. *Seeley.* 10s. 6*d*
**Master Mariner.** By REAR-ADMIRAL CLAUDE CUMBERLEGE, R.N. *Peter Davies.* 8s. 6*d.*
**Rolling Stonemason.** By FRED BOWER. With a Foreword by JOHN BROPHY. *Cape.* 7s. 6*d.*
**True Thomas.** By THOMAS WOOD. *Cape.* 12s. 6*d.*

Mrs. King's life does not seem to have been at all eventful until the year 1907, when, left a widow in Mexico City, in straitened circumstances, and with two young children to support, she went to Cuernavaca, a lovely old town in the State of Morelos, and opened a teashop for tourists. But this impression, created by her leaving her previous history a blank, may be false. It is quite clear, however, that she was absolutely unprepared for the experiences she describes in her book. "Here," she said to herself, when she arrived at Cuernavaca, "I shall make my home, where all is peace and beauty, and nothing has changed, or ever will change." Such optimism may seem strange to those who associate Mexico with violent changes, but the reflection was made in the days of the peace of President Diaz. It had lasted long enough to delude people into thinking it was stable and permanent. But the greed of the rich landowners, the *Hácendados*, in seizing the communal lands of the Indians had produced a discontent, which gave Zapata, the Morolense leader, his opportunity for an organised revolt. It broke out after the fall of Diaz. Cuernavaca was taken by the Zapatists. The Federal troops retreated to Tenanga. Mrs. King describes the siege and the retreat in detail. She writes admirably. Her portraits of the chief figures in the Revolution, Zapata, Madero and Huerta, are amazingly vivid. Her terrible experiences have not made her bitter against Mexico or the Mexicans. "Nothing which could happen to me personally now," she writes in the last chapter, "could make up for what I suffered; it is only in the belief that my neighbours are better off for the storm which broke me that I am reconciled."

Mrs. King, temperamentally unadventurous, had adventures thrust upon her. It is otherwise with Miss Gretchen Green, who from her youth seems to have devoted herself with zeal to seeking adventures. She is a perfect type of the rolling stone. What if it gathers no moss? It gathers an abundance of material for a volume of reminiscences. Miss Green, rolling from one occupation to another in all parts of the globe—now a policewoman in Idaho, now manageress of a tearoom in Venice, now a "rural reconstructionist" in India with Tagore, now a trainer of dogs for the blind in New Jersey, to name a paltry few of her multifarious occupations—has gathered enough material for ten volumes. To squeeze it into one must have been a difficult task. She is revealed as an intrepid woman, and one with a mind of her own. It is an odd mind, so this is an odd book. Its odd title is derived from the name of a small Chinese dry-cleaning shop. "Glorious indiscrimination!" Miss Green says of the shopkeeper's sign. A comment that can be applied to her reminiscences.

"Who shall find a valiant woman?" The implication that this is not so easy seems to me particularly absurd at the moment, as I have found three in the course of reviewing six books. The third is the author of *Sailing Troubadour*. She cannot boast like Miss Green that the world's her oyster. She has not been shaken by the catastrophic tempest which blew Mrs. King out of Cuernavaca, and wrecked her business and her health. Mrs. Klitgaard's chronicle is of a tour she made by water (in a derelict naval pinnace converted into a motor boat) with her husband, a well-known singer, in Belgium and Holland. He sang, and she collected the pennies for their supper. She also took over the navigation of the boat when their engineer deserted them. The tour was not the sport of bright young people, but the courageous effort of stage-folk, near destitution, to earn a living. The tale Mrs. Klitgaard unfolds is not of the kind with which Othello wooed Desdemona, drawing her from her house affairs to listen, enthralled, but it is written with a touching simplicity that appealed to me. It is well illustrated by some lovely photographs taken by Mrs. Klitgaard.

"A great ship didn't suddenly sail away from China with all sails set and fetch up three months later in the English Channel without starting a sheet, or swinging a mainyard." If you want to know how she made the voyage, you should read Rear-Admiral Cumberlege's *Master Mariner*. He learned all about square-sail seamanship from his uncle, master of the brig *Josephine*, and now, retired from the Royal Navy, where he began his long service under sail, lives in a schooner, and sails again. His book, however, is not about his own experiences, but his uncle's. He contributes drawings of ships of all rigs under varying conditions of wind and sea, as nautically exact as the text.

The eulogistic foreword with which Mr. John Brophy introduces Mr. Fred Bower's autobiography, *Rolling Stonemason*, may be responsible for my having been disappointed in it. "Of the context of this book it will be better for me to say nothing," Mr. Brophy writes. "The reader is entitled to get his own impressions at first hand." If of the context, why not of the style? The praise lavished on it by Mr. Brophy has almost intimidated me into admiring it in spite of my dislike of the floral *clichés* from popular journalism, and the tags from political propaganda which are its main ingredients. Mr. Bower has practised the stonemason's craft in three continents. He has prospected

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for gold and worked for the Labour Movement. He is an ardent Socialist, " proud of the clear red blood which allies me to all the decent peoples of the earth. . . . If I saw a trace of blue blood in my veins, I would be off to the doctor." The class bias of Mr. Bower has an almost holy simplicity.

Dr. Wood, the author of *True Thomas* (" My tongue is my ain, true Thomas," he said) is a composer. If he writes music as well as he writes about it, it must be worth hearing. His description of the nature of musical inspiration, and of the process through which the composer gets the music in his brain on to paper, is as clear and precise as Mozart's. " He must accept what he is given. No blame to him if it is not superlatively fine. But ah ! the use he makes of it ! Give him credit for that—for insatiable inquiry, ripeness of judgment, hard work, and resolution, technique." I should add that only one section of this fascinating autobiography is devoted to music. As a boy, Dr. Wood was in the Merchant Service, as a youth at Oxford. He has been a great traveller, a great reader. A man of the widest culture, he has had manifold experiences, including some of the supernatural. He writes of his eventful life with a joyousness which the reader finds infectious. The truth comes naturally to him. The title, *True Thomas*, is most apt.

CHRISTOPHER ST. JOHN

## PEACE AND LAW

**Plan for Peace.** By FRANCIS WILLIAMS. *Methuen.* 3*s.* 6*d.*

**The Law of Peace.** By C. VAN VOLLENHOVEN. *Macmillan.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

Mr. Williams has here gathered together in clear and compact form a useful diagnosis of the causes of our present disturbances, and a body of commonsense suggestions for their mitigation. The value of his contribution lies less in the novelty of his analysis than in the fact that he has a valuably factual mind, which brings up the large assumptions of the dictators against the inconvenient realities which make the difference between propaganda and truth.

Mr. Williams shows clearly that the root trouble in the world arises out of the need the modern dictator has for external glory as the compensation for internal difficulty. Colonisation, as he shows, is no cure for population troubles ; and the supposed economic advantages are far less than is commonly supposed. The raw materials argument is, at best, a half-truth upon which no effective case for reorganisation can be built ; as Mr. Williams drily remarks, no small part of British well-being has been built upon her purchases of raw cotton imported not from a colony but from an independent power. He gives a grim picture of the scale of rearmament, especially in Germany, that is going on ; and he depicts very effectively its probable effects through taxation on that part of national welfare which depends on the expansion of the social services. In discussing the economics of rearmament Mr. Williams gives some effective statistics of the profits recently made by the manufacturers of aeroplanes. It is evident that, short of national manufacture, no government will easily succeed in taking the profits out of preparations for war.

His actual proposals follow fairly well-known lines. He would strengthen the League and stand by collective security. He is in favour of the transfer of British colonies to the mandate system, of wide access to the markets they afford, and of an all-round lowering of the present barriers, as symbolised by Ottawa, to a freer world-trade. Rightly enough, Mr. Williams emphasises the time-factor as the pivot of the whole problem. One's difficulty with his view is to see how, within the requisite period, there is much hope for his proposals. Hitler and Japan, to take only the more obvious potential aggressors, cannot afford to wait while English conservative opinion is converted to the great gesture Mr. Williams rightly desires. The fact is that without wholesale recovery in world-trade war is a necessary function of dictatorship ; and it is difficult to see how, within the confines of the present system, there is any real or permanent prospect of that recovery. Rearmament will, no doubt, bring a temporary improvement. But its costs make it a pathological technique of which the evils far outweigh any possible benefit.

The late Dr. Van Vollenhoven was well known as one of the most distinguished historical students of international law. The present volume is a careful study of its evolution as a doctrinal system, intended to bring out the point that unless we can go beyond the state as the source of law, it is impossible to organise an effective law of peace. The book has the learning we should expect from its author. Its weakness is that, at bottom, it is merely an essay in the optative mood. For by dwelling almost wholly within the boundaries of law, Dr. Van Vollenhoven has put aside the major considerations which explain the present nature and weakness of the law of peace. What we require is an adequate sociological theory of international law ; one that dwells within juridical confines merely can never be a substitute for that. It therefore becomes important not only to show the danger of sovereignty to peace ; it becomes urgent, also, to explain what are the social forces which maintain sovereignty in its grim vigour. As a lawyer, Dr. Van Vollenhoven felt that this was not his function. There is, therefore, a certain lack of realism in his approach to the problems he discusses. The learned will appreciate the impressive erudition here marshalled ; but they will feel that it centres about the by-ways rather than the main high road.

HAROLD J. LASKI

## PROSE SNIPPETS

**An Anthology of Modern Prose.** By A. J. J. RATCLIFF. *Nelson.* 3*s.* 6*d.*

**An Anthology of Modern Drama.** By S. R. LITTLEWOOD. *Nelson.* 3*s.* 6*d.*

**An Anthology of Modern Biography.** By LORD DAVID CECIL. *Nelson.* 3*s.* 6*d.*

The first question raised by every prose anthology is : Why these snippets ? And a really good answer is seldom forthcoming. However, this new series has at least an object : namely, to introduce those " gradually acquiring a library " to the best books of every kind which have appeared in the last quarter of a century. So the cover says. But those are the mists of antiquity to Mr. Ratcliff : he prefers to stick to the 'thirties, the nice, normal 'thirties, represented by (among others) Mr. Eric Linklater, Miss E. H. Young, Mr. John Collier, Mr. Philip Lindsay, Mr. Adrian Bell. " This is the team . . . the Twenties raree-show is over." The prose writers of the last decade—Lytton Strachey, for instance, D. H. Lawrence, Aldous Huxley, Virginia Woolf—were " out of step " and are now " dead " ; their spirit " was too terrible to be anything but temporary." And since, we have happily pulled ourselves together.

> No feature of the new decade is more noticeable than the avoidance of " style " (!) . . . In most of the passages included in this anthology the reader will find a tautness, a controlled factuality ; no beglamourment. . . . We speak in a level tone of voice, gibberings and vociferations over ; not unlike what we hear from our loud-speaker. . . . We are in the period of the Interior Middle Style. . . .

Good Lord, deliver us !

Mr. Littlewood's *Drama* has something to be said for it—namely, that it includes several passages by Bernard Shaw. As far as I could judge, its attractions end there. " Give the other fellows a chance," said Mr. Shaw when approached for contributions ; it sounds arrogant, but turns out to have been, rather, mistaken kindness. Mr. Littlewood tells us that choice was difficult ; it was " one essential . . . that isolated scenes should induce readers to make farther acquaintance with the plays as a whole." Well, several of those plays were quite new to me except by name, but not one extract excited a passing wonder what happened next. Still, whereas Mr. Ratcliff's anthology is 99 per cent. his own fault, the Drama volume cannot be wholly, or even chiefly, " blamed on " Mr. Littlewood, far though he is from having made the best of his bad job. He might have included one or two highbrow dramatists ; he might have chosen more creditable scenes from Noel Coward and Somerset Maugham ; he might have left out whichever of the remaining extracts (if any) is inferior to the rest, and given us, instead, a few pages of *On the Spot* ; and even then, a staggering pointlessness would have been the chief impression. As it is, the book has form. It may acquire historical interest one day, as a record of middle-brow taste in 1936.

Then, Lord David Cecil. What makes his little volume such an entire contrast ? Is it the subject we have most to thank, or the compiler ? Perhaps half and half ; at any rate, one is kept amused from start to finish, and I soon began (according to the intention of the series) hunting for my library list. There is also a pleasant introduction, which provokes to argument. " Biography," says Lord David, " is not an important form of literary art. But it is the only new form." This statement may exasperate at first sight : the book itself obliges one to give in to it. Biography as a conscious art *is* new—and if to be important in art means to need very rare abilities, certainly it is not important.

> Most can grow the flowers now,
> For all have got the seed,

and at times one is inclined to call it rather a trick than an art. I cannot think with Lord David that it owes much to the scientific attitude; this new school is, almost first and foremost, a school for scandal, its besetting virtue is not truth but liveliness. As a result it has very nasty pitfalls, into which its great original fell heavily from time to time. For example, Lord David's extract from *Queen Victoria* contains this sentence: "Whatever else he might be, one thing was certain: Lord Melbourne was always human, supremely human—too human, perhaps." The old stolid biography would have spared us that; so, by the way, would a scientific view of character.

But though the old type of biography had solid worth, one couldn't go back to it; wit, freedom and particularity are delightful things—so is scandal, for that matter—and it was a lucky day when the biographer found it out. If most—or a good many—can grow the flowers at this stage, all the luckier. But the gift may not really be so general, after all; the sustained interest of Lord David Cecil's anthology is perhaps deceptive. I am inclined to think that two-thirds rather than half of the credit for it should be his.

K. JOHN

## "THE EASTERN MARCHES"

**The Peace Settlement in the German-Polish Borderlands.** By IAN F. D. MORROW. *Oxford University Press.* 25*s.*

Mr. Morrow's book has made a timely appearance. It provides a detailed background to the latest developments at Danzig, and it is profoundly relevant to the whole international problem of the moment, dominated as this is by the unending revisionism of Nazi Germany, which more and more clearly reveals the features of its parent, pre-war Pan-Germanism.

He reviews the question of Danzig in the terms of the 'twenties rather than the 'thirties. German interference, in his view, in pre-Nazi days added to the difficulties of situation. He aptly describes the "onerous and somewhat anomalous position" of the High Commissioner of the League of Nations as that of "a watch-dog whose usefulness is severely restricted by the fact that he can only bark and not bite." We are reminded that the League, according to Viscount Ishii's report of November 17, 1920, undertook "to respect and maintain against all foreign aggression the territorial integrity and the political independence of the Free City of Danzig . . .", and it is not very pleasant to read of the French, British and American men-of-war which were sent to Danzig in August, 1920, when there was not, as there now is, an adversary worthy to be feared. In the days when Danzig had reason to fear Poland it was Danzig—and most of the Greiser Senate would certainly have joined in the complaint—which condemned "the League's inability to *enforce* its resolutions."

In view of the Polish-German situation with regard to Danzig this summer, the report of a League Experts' Commission (dated December 1, 1920) may profitably be re-quoted from Mr. Morrow's book: "Against such an attack (*i.e.*, a German attack) the defence of the Polish 'Corridor' would be futile if it were not supplemented by the defence of the territory of Danzig. These two systems of defence cannot be considered separately." The so-called "Corridor" Question—the question of Germany's claim to Pomorze—next engages Mr. Morrow's attention. He rightly emphasises the intense emotional reactions of Prussian travellers to the frontiers erected between East Prussia and the main body of the Reich. Mr. Morrow here arrives at a number of valuable conclusions. The most important of these are that (*a*) the economic distress of East Prussia cannot be attributed to the creation of the "Corridor," but rather to pre-war factors and to "East Prussia's separation from her former Russian hinterland." (*b*) "The importance of the 'Corridor' problem in German political life has been mainly due to the fact that the chief sufferers . . . have been the East Elbian Junkers."

As for the 1934 *détente* between Germany and Poland, I am surprised that Mr. Morrow should consider its effects to have been so considerable with regard to "Corridor" propaganda. My own modest experience leads me to believe that the press—and only the press—has changed its tone in both Germany and Poland. Official German personages still conduct one along the Vistula frontier, indignantly pointing to its certainly provocative character (behind

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the German bank instead of the customary mid-stream arrangement); they still ply one with maps of the most successful period of the German Order's rule and abuse the despicable primitivity of the Poles. Nor did the Poles show any change of heart even before the great Nazi conspiracy in Poland which led, some months ago, to the Kattowice trial. And it should not be forgotten that big Polish meetings have occurred this July to protest against Germany's designs upon Danzig, to which Poland's direct claim has been raised again.

Mr. Morrow's sections on Memel are a little less satisfactory than the rest of this admirable work. Is it quite fair to refer to the Lithuanians sent into Memel-land from Great Lithuania without referring to the fact that many of the anti-Lithuanian leaders in Memel were sent from the Reich after the war? In describing Lithuanian high-handedness and in quoting Herr Hitler's attack upon Lithuania as "a state which ignores the most primitive laws of human society," a false impression is created. Of course the Lithuanians have bullied the Memel-landers, but, even with German help, it is impossible to discover that they (the Lithuanians) ever used such horrible methods as National Socialists have regularly employed against their dissident fellow Germans—and the Lithuanians had far more to fear.

Many of us grew up with the idea that the Versailles treaty-makers gave way to the worst passions that victory arouses. Mr. Morrow corroborates the corrected conclusion which international studies provide. The peacemakers, one finds, were only too rational. Mr. Morrow complains that they often pleased no one; after all, they chose compromise rather than fanaticism. In the spirit of the *philosophes* they mostly rated economic above sentimental considerations—in the case of Danzig, for instance, as in that of Memel. In the hope, perhaps, of leaving room for organic growth, they drafted their clauses without precision, and thus foredoomed the ablest servants of the League—men as different as Knox and Lester—to shameless misrepresentation. Lastly, the peacemakers freed the Slav under-dog—the Polish or Slovakian peasant—from the German or Hungarian top-dog landowner. This brings me to a point which Mr. Morrow possibly neglects. The problems of Eastern Europe are not only created by sheer racial conflict; they are complicated by the claim of the Germans to constitute a superior race. The German in Danzig or East Prussia believes in his inherent right to a higher standard of living than that of his Polish neighbour; it is the same as between the Memel-lander and the Great Lithuanian. Mr. Morrow shows how hollow, indeed how dangerous, is the Nazi claim that racialism will clear everything up. But the danger to which he points is made much more intense by the determination of contemporary Germany to assert, not Equality of Rights, but Pan-German superiority.

ELIZABETH WISKEMANN

## MEDITATIONS ON LIFE AND DEATH

**Euthanasia and Other Aspects of Life and Death.** By HARRY ROBERTS. *Constable.* 7s. 6d.

It is unnecessary to tell readers of this journal that the meditations of Dr. Harry Roberts on life and death are interesting. Some of those contained in this volume they will have read in its columns and they will find that they are worth the re-reading—and that cannot often be said truthfully of the newspaper article. Dr. Roberts divides his book into six sections, but he deals mainly with five subjects: death, sex, crime and punishment, *mens sana in corpore sano*, and education. On all these subjects and at all moments he shows himself to be an unregenerate and unrepentant liberal. The word is used in its widest sense. Dr. Roberts has his roots far back in the primitive liberalism of the eighteenth century. He believes in liberty and personal individuality. He likes people to be happy and intelligent. He dislikes bloodshed, violence, dirt, disease, slavery, and domination. The foundations of his politics and sociology are humanitarianism. He is essentially the sane and humane man. In other words, he follows the long trail of European civilisation, which, so often bent and broken, can still be traced back to the city of Athens between two and three thousand years ago.

It is a curious fact that Dr. Roberts himself only very occasionally seems to be aware that the trail itself is once more in imminent danger of being broken, that the foundations of his political and social thought are almost destroyed, and that his ideals are repudiated by the vast majority of Europeans. The sociological postulates of this book would have been accepted by the vast majority of so-called intelligent human beings in the so-called civilised countries of Europe in 1919. In the miscalled civilised countries of the Europe of 1936 they are rejected with scorn by a very considerable majority. Only in Paris and London and a few capitals of small northern States will Dr. Roberts find people who speak the same political language and possess the same social outlook and ideal as he does. Even there those people are few and their backs are to the wall, for they know that elsewhere thousands of their friends have died with their faces to the wall. The thought of this continually pulls one up as one reads Dr. Roberts. "It may be taken as axiomatic that every deliberate interference with individual liberty needs justification. Each time we limit the range of personal initiative, and lessen the measure of personal responsibility, we do an injury to humanity; and we may rightly be challenged to show that we are coincidently removing evils or conferring benefits that outweigh our act of stultification." Thus does Dr. Roberts begin an essay on "Sterilising the Ineffective." The two sentences are really almost terrifying. In Russia, Poland, Germany, Italy, Portugal, Spain, Greece, and most of the Balkans it is taken as axiomatic that every deliberate interference with individual liberty is justified, and there are a large number of sheep-like people in Great Britain who are beginning to accept the same axiom. On page 208 Dr. Roberts gives a recipe for the education of children by parents. It is, no doubt, an admirable recipe for producing people who think for themselves, individuals, free men in the Attic sense. "A child," says Dr. Roberts, "should not grow up with the notion that obedience and discipline are things to which a weak person has to submit, for fear of a box in the ear from a person whose authority consists entirely in his superior strength." But surely that is precisely the kind of child and the kind of adult which the vast majority of Europeans now consider to be the ideal citizen of the modern State.

Dr. Roberts's first essays are concerned with the question of the right to commit suicide. It is a curious fact that European civilisation has often denied this right to the individual. It seems not unlikely that the new barbarism, sometimes called authoritarianism, will on this point, and on this point alone, agree with Dr. Roberts. The only individual right which the State will leave to its citizens will be the legal right to escape from it by suicide. The frequency with which the right is used will then probably be the measure of the people's civilisation.

LEONARD WOOLF

## TWO GERMANS

**Once Your Enemy.** By HEINRICH HAUSER. *Methuen.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

**Almost Forgotten Germany.** By GEORG SCHWARZ. *Seizin and Constable.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

From the very beginning Heinrich Hauser's job was killing things. As a boy on his father's little estate near Frankfort-on-Oder he would often be left to provide food for a number of people by his own efforts, and would stagger home shouldering a buck, drenched in its blood. In his autobiography blood, lots of it, is mentioned in the first few pages, and thereafter pretty frequently. This is inevitable. Herr Hauser has tried to present the Odyssey of a gently born youth through international and civil war, revolution, industrial misery, in search of something scarcely touched on, and never specified. What that something is we are left to guess, but at the end it seems to be peace—peace within himself, and peace for Germany. Herr Hauser gives a clear and unsentimental picture of his early training as a cadet in the Imperial Navy. From then on through the hectic days of mutiny at sea and revolution in the cities, he keeps a clear mind, retains at all times his faculty of detached observation. Herr Hauser has had a terrifically tough life. Beginning at sixteen or so, he passed through the worst of the German civil war, to become an iron-worker in the Ruhr, which must have been worse than any war. Then he became a sailor and went round the world with various cargoes, finally fetching up in Germany again, full of concern for her future. He does not attempt to chronicle the new regime, in fact he does not once mention Hitler's name, but we are left with the impression that he now sees hope for his country where before he saw none. Herr Hauser must be listened to. His varied experience has won him the right. It is a pity that his book is too small in scope to deal anything like adequately with his subject. A great many threads are left untied, and all the time questions arise which are not answered. But *Once Your Enemy* should certainly have its place on the shelf of anybody who is interested in Europe to-day, not

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JONATHAN CAPE

only for its bearing on the problem of Germany, but also as a document of how much a man can do.

Those who like *Once Your Enemy* will almost certainly not like Georg Schwarz's book. Herr Schwarz is an old man, a Jew now exiled, who has in his time done many amusing and interesting things. His book is alive with a gay and slightly heartless humour, which Robert Graves and Laura Riding have preserved quite admirably in translation. He describes his boyhood in a small provincial town in West Prussia in the '70s and '80s. He describes the class distinctions, the fêtes and functions of a settled consequential life in a way to make one sigh wistfully. He describes food and drink and art collections in a way to make one's mouth water. Upon politics, save in direct relation to his own concerns, he scarcely touches, but gives us instead entrancing glimpses of Danzig and Berlin in the '80s, Munich in the '90s and a delightful chapter on Curiosities of Art-Dealing. We catch a glimpse here and there of famous people—Wassermann and Wedekind, Gerhart Hauptmann (" . . . a young man of dazzling beauty and given to blushing . . ."), as well as all kinds of eccentrics, native and foreign. Sex, for which Herr Hauser can have had very little time (or money) plays quite a large part in Herr Schwarz's life, but in neither book is it overplayed. Herr Hauser, hungry and uncertain, looks forward. Herr Schwarz, in spite of adversity calm and replete, looks back. Both books are well worth reading.

WILLIAM BUCHAN

## SHORTER NOTICES

**The Development of Modern English.** By STUART ROBERTSON. *Harrap.* 10s. 6d.

Mr. Logan Pearsall Smith points out in *The English Language*, a book almost as valuable as Mr. Fowler's *A Dictionary of Modern English Usage*, that the history of the English race and civilisation is embodied in its vocabulary in much the same way as the history of the earth is embodied in the successive strata of geological formation. An attempt has been made by Mr. Stuart Robertson, of Temple University, U.S.A., (the only credential his publishers give us) to summarise the most important facts that linguistic scholars have discovered during the last fifty years about the successive strata of the formation of modern English, and then to discuss how the language appears to-day in the light thus thrown on it. In his preface he expresses the hope that his judgment as to the fitting proportion to be observed between past and present has been " reasonably sound." To the reader, more interested in English as it is to-day, than in its history, the greater amount of space devoted to the present will not seem a fault in proportion, but it is to be hoped that eagerness to get on to the chapters on contemporary pronunciation, spelling, and syntax will not make him neglect the earlier ones altogether. To say that Mr. Robertson's book is comprehensive, well-documented, and scholarly is to pay it fewer compliments than it deserves. To writers it is recommended because it solves many of those linguistic problems which present themselves every time they take up a pen; and offers good reasons, based on historical precedent, for the compromise between conformity and liberty to which they instinctively incline.

**The Secret of Childhood.** By MARIA MONTESSORI. *Longmans.* 7s. 6d.

Those who approach this study of the infant-mind without some knowledge of Dr. Montessori's work and method, may be advised to turn first to Chapter Two of the second part of the book, in which she retells the story of how she stumbled upon the beginning of her method, how from training defective children she came to teach normal children of the poorest class, and presently found the children teaching her. This story is the key to all that has followed, and to all that is embodied in Dr. Montessori's analysis of the child-mind with which the book opens. It may be that in her interpretation of the behaviour of young children she often presses imaginatively beyond the evidence, but her main contention that the child is not a little adult ready to be trained in adult ways, but a growing creature, whose one business in life is to grow, and that the most the teacher can do is to watch carefully that the environment, is one that encourages and does not hinder growth. It would seem that an average normal child, guided during infancy on the principles and methods laid down by Dr. Montessori, is singularly free from Freudian bugaboos and lacks even Adler's inferiority complex. It is curious, but the word that springs to mind again and again, as Dr. Montessori recites the strange and happy experiences she enjoyed in that school where she taught so little and learnt so much, is " well-bred." Good breeding, indeed, often describes the children's behaviour to strangers and visitors. Not manners taught by adults, but spontaneous actions, the result of natural impulses encouraged by opportunities for their display. Here is a book that every mother and every teacher should read, to say nothing of fathers, and statesmen, and lords of misrule generally.

# About Motoring

## A SOCIAL CHANGE

TEN years ago the sons of an income tax payer—as distinguished from a man liable to supertax—either owned no motor vehicle at all, or disported themselves on motor cycles. The sisters of these young men did not dream of owning a car, and if anybody had suggested they should ride motor cycles, would have frozen the suggester with an astonished contempt. To-day a motor cyclist of gentle birth is very nearly—though not quite—a contradiction in terms; motor cycling is fast becoming a class hobby, or to be more accurate, the hobby of the masses if and when, as seldom occurs, the masses can afford to buy motor cycles. But the young men and young women of the Marlborough or Roedean stratum of society own motor cars in astonishing numbers. Some of these families can, of course, afford to bestow brand new baby cars on their adolescent scions, though such gifts are decidedly exceptional. The majority of these youthful owners drive remarkably shabby and rattlesome vehicles of almost forgotten vintage—Morrises, Austins, and such like, which were the glittering pride of somebody's heart perhaps ten years ago, and have since passed through a long succession of hands. The cheque which clinched the last change of ownership amounted on the average to under £10, rather than over £10; in actual fact the last pair of transactions which came under my notice demanded £6 and £7, respectively. The cars are run by young people who pay no income tax. Many of them are entirely supported by their parents, and the mild costs of motoring on the described terms are met out of Christmas and birthday tips, out of some petty legacy, out of a lucky flutter at Kempton Park; or in rare cases from earned increment, such as fees for tutoring a pupil in the holidays; the wages of a girl secretary, who lives at home free of charge, and is allotted her salary as pocket money; or any similar rather amateurish earnings of a modest total. Such cars are normally maintained on the cheapest possible basis. Tax is always compulsory; but only the third party cover need be paid in the way of insurance. Spare parts are purchased from one of those queer dumps where cars which have ceased to be roadworthy are dismantled into their component parts, and where a lucky visit may unearth a slightly worn axle for no more than a dollar. These aged and dilapidated cars are not necessarily and in every case licensed and kept on the road all the year round. Some of them only appear between March 31st and September 30th; others enjoy an even more precarious survival, and are not infrequently laid up because Daddy has discovered that not all the petrol on his garage bill for last quarter went into his own tank, and because ready cash is simply non-existent at the moment. Readers out of touch with these gay, juvenile and impecunious motorists will probably discredit my next statement, which is, nevertheless, absolutely true. These ancient cars cost amazingly little to run. They are almost universally small, designed to cover anything up to 40 miles on eighteen-pennyworth of fuel; and loose as wear has rendered their engines, they can still shift to register this figure. Unquestionably they use far more oil than in their virginity, pumping part of it out through worn main bearings, and part past sloppy pistons, and so out by the exhaust. But they are incredibly reliable. A score of them, all rusty, battered, dilapidated and generating a huge orchestra of squeaks and rattles, operate under my genial gaze, and a compulsory stoppage on the road is so rare an occurrence that the whole gang of owners prate about the amusing incident for days afterwards. After all, their construction was always sturdy, their specification simple, and they are devoid of the multitudinous flimsy gadgets and trouble-savers which create trouble on modern expensive cars after a couple of years of amateur maintenance. They seldom tackle tours or even long cross-country journeys; but day in and day out they convey chattering youth to dance and cinema and golf-house and country club. The garage mechanics regard them with incredulous amusement. The sales managers of the big factories eye them suspiciously, wondering whether Parliament could be scared into prohibiting the road use of any private car more than five years old, and so create openings for extra sales. Mammas, aware that after dark they furnish opportunities for amorous dalliance in the lanes together with an unchallengeable and extremely plausible excuse for late return, passionately wish that the cheap car had never been invented. Papas, aware that their brakes are decidedly dubious, and that the steering is a mass of metal rags, always feel relieved when a honk and a clatter

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signals the prodigal's safe return at least once more. Meanwhile the youngsters who have managed to scrape together the wherewithal to pick some such wreck from a garage of the baser sort revel in a freedom and independence with which no other purchase could endow them; in many cases worship the battered metal as if it were a deity, and expend incessant effort on cleaning, colouring and tuning it; and so rouse the most ferocious and passionate envy in the rest of their fraternity, who hitherto have not backed a winner, earned a little extra pocket money, lost a remembering aunt, or suffer from that rare brand of parent who contrive even in the twentieth century to exert dictatorial authority over offspring who are fast emerging from their teens.

If there is any genuine menace in this very recent phenomenon, it is probably mechanical in nature. There are dark mutterings that the Minister of Transport proposes to extend and intensify police surveillance of the mechanical roadworthiness of motor vehicles. Should he do so, his minions must infallibly discover that in two vital mechanical respects many of these antiquities are perilous; their brakes are usually ridiculous, and their steering is approaching dissolution. It may be argued that weak brakes are unimportant so long as one drives with restraint and discretion; but this assertion ignores the "other fool," not to speak of the efficient driver of an efficient car who rashly assumes that all other cars are efficient, and whose last earthly realisation is the discovery that one car in every thousand requires an incredible distance in which to stop. Anybody who has ever dismantled the steering of a motor car knows that it depends in the last issue on a small metal ball; that this ball is apt to "shoulder" the neck by which it is connected to the chassis; that it is to a lay eye at best rather precariously retained in a metal cup, which wears equally with the ball itself; and that all small and highly stressed metal parts suffer in time and use from a disease known as "fatigue." It cannot be very long before the records chronicle a small outbreak of accidents due to brake and steering failure on the part of aged cars, purchased tenth hand or worse for a mere song. The youngsters of the present day will have had their fun; but if their younger brothers and sisters are to share it, I think it will cost them more. For ere long a wise Government may be rather severe on people who sell or use cars in terrible mechanical condition.

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# Week-end Competitions

## No. 335

**Set by Hamish Miles**

On one and the same day, I read in the newspapers of a shipwreck, in which "there was no panic, and at the captain's order of '*Ladies and children first!*' the passengers gave a cheer"; and of a dispute in the polo-playing world, of which one disputant remarks that it is all "*a tempest in a tea-cup.*" The usual prizes are offered for three similar refinements of accepted English phrases, proverbs, or maledictions. Competitors who refine too subtly should indicate their raw material.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Friday, August 21st.
2. Competitors may use a pseudonym. Typescript is not insisted on, but writing must be on one side of the paper only.
3. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.
4. No competitor is eligible for more than one prize in any one week.

The result of last week's competition will be announced in our next issue.

## RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 333

**Set by T. W. Earp**

On the model of such a line as "A Mr. Wilkinson, a clergyman," or "From the pale forehead to the jet-black shoe," the usual prizes are offered for the best and second-best sonnet, of the most exemplary flatness, on the virtues of aspirin, an unsuccessful attempt to swim the Channel, or a favourite film-star.

**Report by T. W. Earp**

A large number of competitors rightly perceived that this was an invitation to the art of sinking in poetry, or at any rate maintaining a level as nearly dead as possible, and by those very means obtaining an expressive effect. It is to be hoped, therefore, that an apology may not be needed to the almost equally large number who seem to have found the problem ambiguous. Their method of attack has been either to soar into eloquence and then come to earth with a bump, or simply to write humorous verse. Elizabeth Kemp in the first category, and Gerald Summers in the second, deserve the unsubstantial consolation of knowing that their delightful efforts would have won the puzzles that were not set. E. L. Franklin and Quintus are outstanding among those who made the mistake of sending in "real poetry." As is usually the case with sonnets, even when unsuccessful as a whole, there were many good endings, and of the sort desired. Such, for instance, as—

The pain appeared, so much improved is he
That he is able to come down to tea. (S. S. B.)
The rich buy quantities, and strain the heart. (T. M. Paul.)
And when he finally began to sink,
They had to pull him back into the boat.
(H. Broadbent.)
She sobbed and sank. How sad that she is dead.
(Gordon Simpson.)

But T. E. McTheard attains almost too deep an abyss with—

Nightly I pine beside your photograph,
How I do wish I had your autograph.

The first prize is awarded to the sustained banality of Charles G. Box, whose mixture of narrative interest and exhortation strikes a clear note of disingenuous naiveté, and tails off with the right dying fall. The second is divided between L. V. Upward and E. W. Fordham, who reach a coherent flatness that, as metrical statement, possesses its own properties of style.

### FIRST PRIZE

It must be, surely, sixty years or more
Since Captain Webb astonished every one
By doing what 'twas thought could not be done,
Swimming from Dover to the Calais shore
And forty years at least elapsed before
A man Burgess by name, a Yorkshireman
Repeated the performance, and began
A series of successes, nigh a score.
The difficulty of the task is plain
From its most rare accomplishment; and so
One failure, friend, need never cause you pain:
Try, try again: you may succeed, you know.
But 'tis not easy just to catch the tide,
And there are many obstacles beside.

CHARLES G. BOX.

# London Amusements

## MATINEES

*All at 2.30 p.m. unless otherwise stated.*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **ALDWYCH.** | **After October.** | Tu., & Wed. |
| **ALHAMBRA.** | **Mystery and Magic.** | Daily. |
| **APOLLO.** | **The Fugitives.** | Wed., Sat. |
| **COLISEUM.** | **Lilac Time.** | W., Thu., Sat. |
| **DUCHESS.** | **Spring Tide.** | Wed. & Sat. |
| **GARRICK.** | **Storm in a Teacup.** | Wed., Thurs. |
| **GLOBE.** | **"Call It a Day."** | Wed. & Thurs. |
| **PLAYHOUSE.** | **Whiteoaks.** | Wed., Th., Sat. |
| **QUEEN'S.** | **"The Ante-Room."** | W. & Sat. |
| **ROYALTY.** | **Winter Sunshine.** | Wed., Thurs. |
| **ST. JAMES'.** | **'Pride & Prejudice.'** | W., Th., S. |
| **ST. MARTIN'S.** | **Heroes Don't Care.** | Tu., Fri. |
| **SAVOY.** | **Lady Precious Stream.** | M., Th., S. |
| **STRAND.** | **Aren't Men Beasts!** | Wed., Thurs. |
| **WHITEHALL.** | **Anthony & Anna.** | W. & S. |

## THEATRES

**ALDWYCH.** Evgs., 8.30. Tu., W., 2.30. Tem. 6404.
MARY CLARE in
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By RODNEY ACKLAND.

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**APOLLO.** (Gerrard 2663.) 8.30. Wed., Sat. 2.30
**THE FUGITIVES,** by Walter Hackett.
MARION LORNE. GODFREY TEARLE.
PHYLLIS DARE. EDWIN STYLES.

**COLISEUM.** Tem. 3161 Evgs at 8.15.
**LILAC TIME.**
Mats., Wed., Thurs., and Sat. at 2.30.

**DUCHESS,** Catherine Street, W.C.2. TEM. 8243.
Evgs. 8.30. Mats., Wed. & Sat. 2.30. (Smoking).
**SPRING TIDE**
LOUISE HAMPTON ARTHUR SINCLAIR

**GARRICK.** (Tem. 4601.) 8.30. Mats., W., Th., 2.30.
**STORM IN A TEACUP.**
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**GLOBE.** Ger. 1592. Evgs., 8.15 Sharp.
Mats., WEDS. and THURS., 2.30.
IRENE BROWNE & OWEN NARES in
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By Dodie Smith.

**HIPPODROME.** Ger. 3272. TWICE NIGHTLY.
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**PLAYHOUSE.** Whitehall 7774.
Evgs., 8.30. Ex. Mon. Mats., Wed., Thurs., Sat. at 2.30.
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**QUEEN'S.** Ger. 4517. Com. Fri., Aug. 14, at 8 p.m.
Subs. 8.30. 1st Mat., Wed., Aug. 19. Subs. W. & S., 2.30.
DIANA WYNYARD in
**"THE ANTE-ROOM."**

**ROYALTY.** Ger. 7331. All Seats Bookable.
Evgs., 8.30. Mats., Wed. & Thurs., 2.30.
NICHOLAS HANNEN, ATHENE SEYLER in
**WINTER SUNSHINE.**

**ST. JAMES'.** (Whi. 3903). No perfs. Mons.
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**"PRIDE AND PREJUDICE."**
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**ST. MARTIN'S.** Tem. 1443. 8.40. Tues., Fri., 2.30.
**HEROES DON'T CARE.**
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REX HARRISON. CORAL BROWN.

**SAVOY.** London's Longest Run. (Temple 8883.)
EVENINGS, 8.15. Mon., Thurs., Sat., 2.30.
**LADY PRECIOUS STREAM**
Esme PERCY. Viola TREE. Marjorie MARS.

**STRAND.** (Tem. 2660.) 8.30. Wed., Thurs., 2.30.
Robertson Hare, Alfred Drayton, John Mills in
**AREN'T MEN BEASTS!**
"A ROARING FARCE."

**WHITEHALL.** Smoking. (Whitehall 6692.)
EVGS., 8.30. Mats., WED. & SAT., 2.30.
**ANTHONY AND ANNA.**
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## PICTURE THEATRES

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## LITERARY

RONALD ADAM PLAY COMPETITION. As recently notified in the press, Ronald Adam of the Embassy Theatre, Swiss Cottage, N.W.3, is holding a Play Competition for non-musical three-act plays to be submitted by September 30th, 1936. Rules and particulars from: THE PLAY SECRETARY, Embassy Theatre, N.W.3.

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(*continued from page 240.*)

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At any pharmacy for next to nought !

L. V. UPWARD

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Though not precisely cheap, 'tis far from dear,
And when one's body feels unduly warm
One's gratified to find that drug is near.
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A gentle perspiration, and a drop
In temperature (the latter is no doubt
Occasioned by the former). Then 'twill stop,
Or if not stop, at least alleviate
So many pains to which one's flesh is heir
That it is satisfactory to state
That it is purchasable anywhere.
  The drug is aspirin ! Perhaps the best
  Of all the contents of the medicine chest.

E. W. FORDHAM

## CALIBAN'S PROBLEM CONTEST

### PROBLEM 190.—A HOME FROM HOME

By W. A. CARO

*"May I repeat," writes Mr. Caro, in sending this amusing problem "that any contribution of mine is but little return for the many hours of pleasure that your problems have afforded me?"*

One of the lesser known philanthropic institutions is devoted to the care and maintenance of aged and decayed mathematicians and their female dependents.

Recently it was my privilege to be shown round this home. I asked one of the inmates how many of them there were. His reply was very curious, if hardly illuminating—"Well, I can't remember the actual figure, but I do know that the sum of all the exact integral divisors of the number of men (excepting the number of men itself) is equal to the number of women."

"How interesting!" I remarked, and tried to escape. He, however, continued with—"Similarly the sum of the factors of the number of women is equal to the number of men."

I hurried out of the institution before I met anyone else. Nevertheless, the beastly thing has worried me ever since.

*How many inmates were there?*

### PROBLEM 188.—TEAPOTS

B must equal either 1, 2 or 3. By trial the only solution is soon found to be :—

$$\begin{array}{r} \text{B A L L} = 2311 \\ \text{B A T} = 235 \\ \hline \text{T E A P O T} = 543085 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

### PROBLEM 187.—CROSS-COUNTRY LIFE

A set of Low's cartoons goes to: G. H. Andrews, Roundelay, Farnham Road, Guildford.

*Five* points are awarded.

### PRIZES FOR PROBLEM SOLVERS

A set of Low's cartoons is awarded to the sender of a correct solution selected at random.

In addition, a record is kept of correct solutions sent, and of the points scored weekly by solvers. On attaining 100 points a solver is entitled to a prize consisting of any book (or books) reviewed or advertised in these columns, of a value not greater than 10*s.* Solvers who have won a prize on this basis are eligible for a second prize on attaining a further 120 points, and for a third prize on attaining a further 150. Solutions must be addressed to CALIBAN, c/o the Editor, and must reach this office not later than Tuesday week following publication of the problem. Solutions to two problems may be sent in one envelope, but on separate sheets of paper.

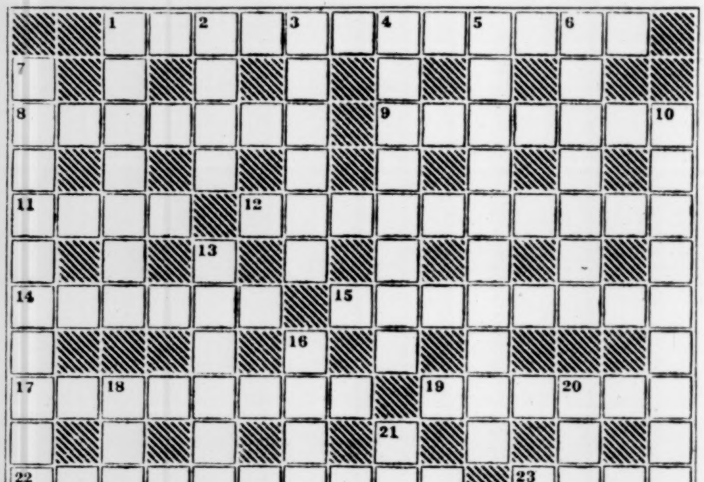
Some indication should be given of the method of solution.

[U.S.A. Competitors. The Editor regrets that the prizes offered in our Week-end Competitions cannot apply to American competitors.]

CALIBAN

## WEEK-END CROSSWORD 336

The sender of the first correct solution to be opened may choose as prize a copy of either *This England* or *The Playtime Omnibus*. Envelopes should be addressed to "CROSSWORDS," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1, and must arrive not later than first post next Wednesday. Prize-winners should address their claims to the Editor.



Set by L.-S.

The last week's winner is
Mr. N. K. Stephen, 42 Eton Avenue, N.W.3.

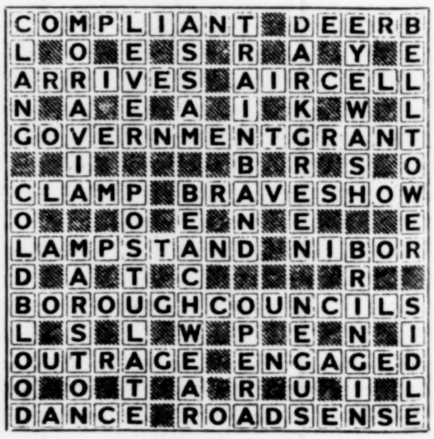
ACROSS.

1. Where bloomers are encouraged.
8. Shun ale to do it.
9. Rules for half-days off?
11. An old one of 21.
12. In these days there is no high light.
14. Money for letting go.
15. Sounds like any Naval vessel.
17. They have touching ideas of those whom they do not know by sight.
19. French father declares himself currently.
22. A sunny art I find not healthy.
23. Such countries are naturally resourceful.
25. Place of the red room in Ireland.
26. Though a smile does it force is often used.
27. Flashy disturbance sometimes striking.

DOWN.

1. Does this prevent the picture from being too hot?
2. Cricketing figure.
3. Racy adjective.
4. We hope this journey doesn't lead to a bad fall.
5. Presumably could not be played when one was 7.
6. How the vine has to die away.
7. The reverse of homecoming.
10. Jack's climbing race?
13. Did Jason find this in duplicate on his fleece?
16. He has a beautiful profession.
18. "—, I know not why I am so sad."
20. A pointed little remark.
21. They have been recently coupled.
24. In Scandinavia they capitalise it.

### LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD



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# THE WEEK IN THE CITY

### By TOREADOR

MR. SLOAN AND MR. ROOSEVELT—AMERICAN EQUITIES REVIEWED —ELECTRIC POWER AND LIGHT PREFERRED—COAL SHARES

WHEN Mr. Alfred P. Sloan, president of General Motors, writes about motors he is well worth reading: when he discusses the economics of Government spending he is not so helpful. In his half-yearly report to stockholders he predicts that the American motor industry this year will approach 85 per cent. of its 1929 output. "The motor car," he says, "still holds, next to food, shelter and clothing, a preferred position in relation to consumers' purchasing power." The American consumer has been encouraged to buy motor cars by being offered easy credit terms and better engineering value for his money. But the market as a whole, Mr. Sloan says, has been stimulated by Government spending, which he describes as "entirely artificial and undesirable." In his words: "It is impossible for it to go on indefinitely—a fact too easily lost sight of in the recovery process." Mr. Sloan should define more clearly the nature of the Government spending which he regards as undesirable and dangerous. Would he consider Government money spent on relief as undesirable and that spent on armaments as desirable? No doubt he would—if the first sort of spending were to upset private business. I suspect that Mr. Sloan has exaggerated the stimulating effects of the Washington Government's expenditures. When Mr. Roosevelt embarked upon vast Government power schemes and competed with private enterprise, he caused the public utility companies to postpone their capital expenditures with the result that his spending in this field had a deflationary effect. However, Wall Street has now come to regard Mr. Roosevelt's unbalanced budget as stimulating to the point of inflationary, so that if the President were defeated in the coming elections there would, after the first frenzy, probably be a slump in equities. The wise investor in Wall Street is praying for a narrow victory for Mr. Roosevelt in the hope that this will damp down the President's radicalism without curtailing too rapidly the Government's expenditures.

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Having positively recommended certain American equity shares on returning from New York last December, I have since felt a sort of moral responsibility to keep Wall Street under review. This is absurd, of course, but the awful consequences of tipping were brought home to me recently when I met an ardent investor who had been alternately cursing and pitying herself since December for not having acted upon my American recommendations. These well-favoured stocks enjoyed an excellent rise in the first three months of the year except the First Boston Corporation, the black sheep of my flock, which was included as a high-yielding income stock and actually declined (at the present price of 44½ it yields 6.7 per cent on dividends and 13 per cent on estimated earnings). On March 28th I reviewed my recommendations and suggested taking profits on displays of strength. In April came a major reaction, the Dow Jones industrial index falling by 11.3 per cent. On May 2nd I again suggested buying, but confined my recommendations to stocks with good earnings yields:

| | Price May 2nd. | Present Price. | 1936 6 months Earnings Per share. | Present Annual Dividend Rate. | Yield % on Earnings.* | Yield % on Dividends. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Chrysler ........ | 93¾ | 119¾ | $6.83 | $6.00 | 11.40 | 5.01 |
| Borg-Warner ... | 68 | 76½ | 2.93 | 3.00 | 7.66 | 3.92 |
| Western Union ... | 75 | 88 | 2.65 | 2.00 | 6.02 | 2.27 |
| Phillips Petroleum | 41¾ | 43¼‡ | 1.77 | 1.00 | 8.19 | 2.31 |
| General Motors ... | 60¼ | 68⅝ | 3.17 | †2.00 | 9.24 | 2.91 |

* Double the first six months' figures.
† Plus extras.
‡ Cum. rights to subscribe to one new share in fourteen at $30.

The Dow Jones industrial index, under the stimulus of better and better trade news and excellent second-quarter earnings, has risen by 17.8 per cent. since April 29th. It has now got to the point where profits might well be taken on days of strength, but the "bull" market is by no means ended.

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Of the American preferred shares Electric Power and Light $6 (first) preferred, which I recommended at 24½ and upwards, should still be held (or bought) at 72½ cum arrears of $23 per share. The income derived by United Gas from its one-third holding in the new oilfield of Rodessa makes all the difference. Electric Power and Light owns nearly all the second preferred shares and half the common shares of United Gas. Last year when oil contributed practically nothing, only $1.8 millions were available for the second preferred shares of United Gas, the dividend requirements of which are $6.2 millions a year. This year United Gas has 94 wells in Rodessa with a net production of about 22,000 barrels a year, yielding an income, say, of about $5 millions a year. This rate would enable United Gas to cover its second preferred dividends, giving Electric Power and Light an income of over $6 millions a year. Adding the income from its profitable electricity subsidiaries, estimated at $2 millions this year, Electric Power and Light would have over $8 millions to meet expenses and bond interest of $1.8 millions and first preferred dividends of $5.1 millions. Thus, if the preferred dividend arrears of United Gas could be ignored, Electric Power and Light $7 and $6 first preferred dividends are now being earned.

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Coal shares have come into fashion since my Statistical Assistant recommended them on April 18th of this year. Profits are rising, except in South Wales, the miners are quiet and the Coal Selling Schemes came into force at the beginning of this month. Now it seems probable that the weaker type of coal selling schemes adopted in South Wales, Scotland, Durham, etc., will be eventually replaced by the completely centralised scheme of Lancashire. According to a recent P.E.P. report, nothing less than a central selling committee for each of the main districts will improve the "average sales efficiency of the industry." The object of the selling schemes is, of course, to put the coal industry in a stronger bargaining position and so to raise the present level of prices and wages. Last year a guilty conscience induced the big coal consumers to pay higher prices for coal voluntarily, so that the lot of the miners could be improved. Now they will be under compulsion to pay more. The semi-monopolist buyers (railways and electricity companies) will be faced with monopolist sellers in the shape of "central committees." That is why knowledgeable people are talking in terms of much higher prices of coal. My Statistical Assistant sends me the following table, giving the profits per ton of coal mining in various districts:

Profit (after depreciation) per ton of Coal Sold.

| | North Derby and Notts. | Yorks. | Lancs. | Scotland. | Durham. | S. Wales. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1933 .............. | +11.3d. | +9.3d. | +1.6d. | −0.2d. | −4.5d. | −1.5d. |
| 1934 .............. | +12.3 | +10.6 | +5.2 | +5.8 | −2.9 | −1.3 |
| 1935 .............. | +13.7 | +10.2 | +7.6 | +10.7 | −3.5 | −1.0 |
| Dec. qtr. 1934 ... | +16.3 | +12.9 | +10.9 | +11.7 | −3.5 | −3.9 |
| 1935 Mar. ......... | +17.6 | +16.9 | +13.7 | +11.3 | −3.9 | −7.4 |
| 1935 June ......... | +2.6 | +3.8 | −0.1 | +5.1 | −4.4 | −2.6 |
| 1935 Sept. ...... | +6.2 | −1.0 | −9.5 | +3.1 | −7.4 | −3.0 |
| 1935 Dec. ......... | +24.9 | +17.8 | +21.9 | +21.9 | +1.0 | +7.5 |
| 1936 Mar. ......... | +31.4 | +20.9 | +29.5 | +19.9 | +3.7 | −5.5 |

*Statistical Assistant:* It does not, of course, follow that all the mines in any one district are making the same rate of profit, since natural conditions and management may and do vary very widely between mine and mine. The profits in the first four do not suggest a "depressed industry but amortisation is not allowed for." I have brought up to date my original list of coal shares.

| | Year ended | Earnings % | Dividend % | Price April 18. | Present Price. | Yield % on Earnings. | Yield % on Dividend. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| North Derby & Notts— | | | | | | | |
| Bolsover ... | 31 Dec., 1935 | 15.7 | 9 | 39/- | 44/- | £7 2 9 | £4 1 9 |
| Shipley ...... | 31 Mar., 1936 | 18.4 | 8 | 29/- | 27/6 | 11 3 0* | 5 16 0 |
| S. Yorkshire— | | | | | | | |
| Yorks Amalgamated ... | 31 Mar., 1936 | 4.9 | 4 | 16/3 | 22/- | 4 9 0 | 3 12 9 |
| Lancashire— | | | | | | | |
| Manchester Collieries | ,, | 4.3 | 4 | 15/6 | 17/- | 5 1 0 | 4 14 0 |
| Scotland— | | | | | | | |
| Fife Coal ... | 31 Dec., 1935 | 12.4 net | 7½ net | 42/6 | 46/- | 7 1 6 | 5 6 0 |
| Durham— | | | | | | | |
| Horden ...... | 30 Sept., 1935 | 5.0 | 5 | 22/9 | 26/3 | 3 16 0 | 3 16 0 |

* On earnings of 15.3% on increased capital.

Shipley is my first selection followed by Bolsover, Fife and Manchester Collieries. The fall in the price of Shipley is due to the new issue of shares in June—one in five at *22s. 6d.* As last year's earnings on the increased capital, even if the new money brings in nothing extra, are equivalent to 15.3 per cent., the dividend should be maintained at 8 per cent.

*Toreador:* You have not mentioned my favourite coal share—Coltness Iron. True, it has a steel foundry, a cement works and a brick-yard, but its main revenue comes from its subsidiary the Warwickshire Coal Company. This is probably the richest and best managed of the Midland collieries and I am told that it could maintain an output of 1,000,000 tons of coal for a hundred years. Last year Coltness Iron again increased its dividend and this year it will probably pay *3s.* per share and earn over *5s.* per share. At *67s.* the *15s.* shares return a dividend yield of about 4½ per cent. This week a line of shares came on the market at around *65s.* and were readily snapped up.

**Company Meeting**

# ASSOCIATED BRITISH PICTURE CORPORATION LIMITED

The Ninth Ordinary General Meeting of the Corporation was held in London on Thursday last.

Mr. John Maxwell (Chairman and Managing Director) presiding, first dealt with the balance sheet and accounts and, continuing, said (in part) :—

The trading profit, at £926,482, shows an increase of almost £270,000 over last year's figure, this being mainly accounted for by the very good results produced by the company's cinemas. To some extent this represents an improvement in trading conditions throughout the country generally.

The film production and the film distribution side of the business have both again made profits, although I may again state that we have not brought into the Corporation's accounts any profit from the film production side of the business. I referred last year to the unsatisfactory conditions prevailing in film production, and I am now glad to tell you that improvement is in sight. The wild welter of frenzied finance that created these conditions is now abating. More rational conditions are already operating and I anticipate shortly a return to normal conditions that will enable British film production to become stabilised and prosperous again.

In proposing that the Ordinary Dividend should be at the rate of $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. actual (less tax), making $12\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. (less tax) for the year, the Directors feel that they are continuing along the conservative lines they have followed in their distribution in past years.

The improvement in the liquid position of the undertaking is reflected by an increase from £180,000 to £648,000 in the surplus of liquid assets consisting of Debtors, Stocks and Cash, after deducting Creditors.

We mention in the Directors' Report that the outlook in the cinema department of the business is satisfactory, and the returns we have received for the first $3\frac{1}{2}$ months of the current year show a considerable improvement even over the very satisfactory figures of last year. I therefore look forward with extreme confidence to our being able to submit to you at our annual meeting next year an even better picture than we have been able to give you now.

Regarding the 1,800,000 shares which at present remain unissued: your Directors have given a good deal of thought to the position in general, and have now decided that the present time would be appropriate for the issue of these shares. They propose, therefore, to offer them to the existing ordinary shareholders for subscription on bonus terms.

The report and accounts were unanimously adopted.

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